









ERRATA

- Page 25, Line 1—Omit "no."
.. 46. .. 23—Omit "and who."
.. 66. .. 30—Insert comma after "activity."
.. 68. .. 21—Read "the elucidation of."
.. 75. .. 34—Read "is Creative Effort."
.. 79. .. 24—Read "begun" instead of "headed."
.. 86. .. 27—Read "insistence."
.. 105. .. 16—Read "is made" instead of "exists."
.. 147. .. 5—Read "to" for "of."
.. 171. .. 16—Read "from."
.. 188. .. 7—Omit comma after "gravity."
.. 200. .. 7—Read "were" for "was."
.. 219. .. 20—Insert "of" after "pair."
.. 237. .. 18—Omit comma after "creative."
.. 259. .. 4—Read "with" instead of "and."



Bertram Stevens

CREATIVE EFFORT

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to 120 copies, of which
100 are for sale.*

TO THE FUTURE EFFORT



CREATIVE EFFORT

AN ESSAY IN
AFFIRMATION

By NORMAN LINDSAY

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To whom does one offer the gift of a thought?

To him who already thinks it.

The mission of the thinker is not to enlighten, but to confirm. The material for enlightenment is already there, like a piled-up beacon; the new thought is but a spark that sets it alight.

Anger at the stupidity of common minds is foolish, save in youth, when it is a stimulus.

Yet all high minds wish to offer the gift of thought to mankind, and because it is rejected they become bitter.

But gold is no use to a savage. He prefers iron, which is useful to him. And here the savage is wise. One cannot blame the common mind, because it seeks common thoughts—vulgar utilities—for these things help it.

If the common man is also able to catch a little at higher thoughts, so much the better; but he has caught something in passing not addressed to him.

The message of the Creative Effort is to him whose mission is to carry on the Creative Effort.



EXISTENCE—LIFE

ALL who would examine the problem of Life must first remove from it the problem of Existence. It is the confusion between these two things that has confused all human morality.

By Existence one comprehends the body, and all that serves to supply its needs, to keep its machinery active.

By Life one understands all that goes beyond the body, the impulse that we vaguely call the mind, the soul, the intellectual process.

The body is the poor relation of the mind, the servant, the vehicle. In serving its needs, one supplies movement; in serving its senses, one supplies material for the intellectual process.

Between these functions, high and low, one must seek a direction for Man's destiny.

To find that direction is to find the High Morality.

In short, to find the direction of Life.

From prime necessity, from the bare struggle for existence, man has elaborated the Social System. All efforts that are commercial, political, scientific, seek one end—the service of the body. The sociological structure exists to feed and clothe the human mechanism. The system which formulates rules for conduct goes no further than to keep order in this primitive process.

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The efforts of all common humanity are directed to one end—to make existence less difficult. To this end those rules of conduct that pass for morality also tend.

All that is useful to this procedure is accepted as important. All that is useless to the body is rejected.

Search for all that common minds reject as useless to the struggle for Existence, and you will find all that serves Life.

At its highest, where does one find man's effort trend away from the struggle for existence?

In Creative art.

Therefore, in Creative art one must find the direction of Life.

A statement so intrinsically aristocratic must be repudiated by all common minds. That is understood.

Hitherto, all efforts to express morality have been democratic. Even those who have announced an aristocratic ideal have presumed that it must concern the Few imposing their will on the Many. But such ideals are political, not moral. The religious impulse, though it demands an aristocracy of the Elect, does so with the democratic cry that all men are equal in the sight of God.

But in stating that the creative impulse finds a direction for Life, there is no intention of imposing either a creed or a will upon mankind. Mankind, indeed, may be excused for finding itself implicated. There is not even an intention

here to disparage the common morality of Existence, for to fall foul of popular morality is to fall foul of the blood, the bowels, and the nervous system; to attack the common mind is to attack the functions of the body, for the effort of all common minds is directed to the maintenance of these functions.

That there is a Direction for existence in this effort no one doubts. Its effort to maintain order alone sufficiently justifies its claim to importance. And it is important, for the vehicle that contains Life is drawn by this Cart-horse, Existence.

Those whose minds are stimulated only by the problem of maintaining and ordering the mechanism of the body strive for a political end, which they call vaguely "the good" of mankind.

Let it be understood that one admits the importance of this problem, but that one draws aside from it. For it has only a small significance to Life.

If there is a belief stated here, it is offered to the few; to those who address themselves to the highest achievement—to the creative effort.

For this aristocratic ideal makes no claim to dominate other souls. Its effort is dominion only over self. It vindicates the individual achievement; the creative effort of the One that may embrace in its effort the higher effort of mankind.

To approach the problem of Life we must arrive by the footsteps of Life's great critics.

And to follow this high-road leads to an enigma.

Why do all great critical intellects turn from the spectacle of mankind to despair of mankind?

Why do those who set out with the greatest love for life, the highest belief in man's power to achieve, end by repudiating all hope for man?

Why do those who can foresee the greatest destiny for man, discover at last that man is unworthy of any destiny at all?

We must put aside in this enquiry all those lesser intellects who find man's destiny in affairs. These good optimists and progressivists mistake the gastric process for the fulfilment of Life, and find the universal impulse in their own activity. To them progress is a synonym for restlessness and change.

It is to the activity of these minds that man owes the social structure, mechanical ingenuity, the tinkering curiosity of the scientist. Since they find a passionate interest in serving existence, it is but just that they should claim the direction of Life to be material, for their own efforts exist by striving with material facts.

Least of all to be considered are those feminine half-minds that find in creeds, political or religious, a direction for life. No genuine intellect has ever yet accepted a creed, for the acceptance of such a thing dismisses a claim to intellect.

A creed no more than fills an empty space. It is a confession of inability to move save in the track of another. And those who make creeds, Jesus or Robespierre, express their love for

humanity by wreaking upon humanity their hatred also.

To all minds, great or small, man's life on earth must be the first problem. It is the danger of great minds that they find in it the final problem.

And herein lies the despair of great minds.

For the years of seeking among the mass of mankind for a direction for man, bring an inevitable conclusion. There is no order, no direction. For all its glibness, its ideality-mongering, its pretence at refinement, the great mass of humanity is concerned with only three problems: filling its belly, clothing its body, exercising its senses. Follow any trail you will—political, social and commercial, and its end is one of these needs. The vulgar expression of Art does no more than refine or stimulate the bare struggle for existence. Popular religion has never yet defined a spiritual direction for mankind. At its best, it is the poor relation of the Police Court, but less effective, for the civil code can affirm its authority; the religious code cannot. Religion has never served to express effort, but to express emotion. It has given an outlet to vulgar egotism by a sense of security, to cowardly minds a release from the primitive terror of darkness, and to savage and morbid minds the desire to inflict pain. Whatever its expressed intention, its effect has always been political, and always debasing, for its impulse has been to take the responsibility of life from the man and thrust it upon God. And therein it has served the powers of Evil truly, for without an individual sense of responsibility, human morality has not even begun.

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By human morality, one understands the effort to preserve order in the process of existence.

In this effort human morality has never got beyond rules of conduct, which change with the social conditions that inspire them. Morality as so understood is not a high problem, and is often so misdirected as to attack the very thing it seeks to preserve, which is the procedure of existence. One may see this in nearly all sexual arrangements, where, in its desire to preserve a conviction of seriousness and importance, it has also contrived to inflict a sense of shame, secrecy, and even a penalty.

All this is but logic for schoolboys and immature minds. Still, such as it is, this social structure, this absurd jumble of politics, religion, commercialism; of racial animosity, class distinctions, and industrial hatreds; this desperate effort to fuse the primitive passions and communal necessity; this stress of furious activity overlaid by a thin layer of education and culture, and the sporadic effort of small movements to refine, to decorate, and to emotionalise its needs; this, such as it is, is the material out of which life is made.

For somewhere amongst all this deafening and mechanical uproar, there stretches the tiny umbilical cord of effort—the effort that seeks always something higher, clearer, more beautiful than the bare service of existence.

And amidst such an uproar, such a trampling of crowds, where is one to find this tiny thread; and, if it is there, from what direction did it come; what direction does it take?

For it is always man who confuses the direc-

tion of man; it is always the vulgar cries of Existence that drown the subtle calling of Life.

No wonder the critic of Life turns from this spectacle sick at heart. The impulse of all high thought, high effort, is to bring these as a gift to Life. Above all, it wishes to give to those worthy of receiving; to add its vision of beauty, and its clarity of mind to the dignity of a clean and orderly existence. But seeing the collective stupidity of mankind, its vast, aimless egotism, its irresponsibility, its refusal of all high discipline, and worst of all, how much there is vile and base in it, what can the high intellect do but shudder and despair?

See in this shudder to what desperate expedients man has turned to find a direction for man! At his highest, might not man be turned in the end to high ideals, courage and gaiety, justice and wisdom?

We know the Greek genius sought to impose such a definite end on man. Might not future man, too, love beauty in all its forms, and strive for a state great and dignified?

Or, failing the higher plan, might not man become a civil creature, abiding by his own laws, seeking to alleviate the distressful problem of existence, be just according to his communal code, and kindly according to his own humanity? What, you say mankind already strives for this ideal? My good friend, the humanitarian, much labouring in filth has vitiating your sense of smell. A generation of humanitarian talk and sociological discussion ends in the greatest cataclysm of political hatred and bloodshed the world has ever seen. And after the smoke of this world war, amid the stink of putrefying

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corpses, and the memory of unmentionable deeds, the voice of the optimist is still loudest, proclaiming that the Messiah of Humanitarianism has risen at last.

Yes, we understand this talk. You must hope for man, my friend, or die of horror of man!

But I say that each generation puts forward its humanitarian, political and social and ideal as something new. Since the beginning of our earthly valuation of Time, each generation has done so; to the end of all things earthly it will continue to do so. The ideal has never been realized yet. It never will be realized.

The collective animal, Man, cannot change. Each day are born newly its collective elements of good and evil, each day perish its collective elements of good and evil. The sociological process of a generation dies with its generation. The small quantity of administrative intelligence that governs the vast incapable mob is a fixed quantity, sufficient for the needs of its generation, neither higher nor lower than the one that went before. There is no progress here, only, in Nietzsche's phrase, "eternal recurrence."

The individual voice that calls for higher thoughts, higher deeds, a greater breadth of vision, a finer order of existence, is always isolated, listened to vaguely, or not at all, and remembered only by its isolated fellows, so few that in a thousand years, one may count them on the fingers of a hand.

Even you, my progressive friend, have your

moments of despair, and yet you exist amid the dust of affairs, which obscures all efforts to see clearly. You believe still that man will some day impose his will on necessity; the belief that sustained you with hope a million years ago!

What was the query? All high minds set out to find a direction for life, and end at the blank wall of despair for man.

We know what caused the despair. The conviction that mankind is unworthy of a high destiny, of futurity, of the eternal force that we call life.

The query must go deeper still. What set the high mind in this quest for man's destiny? The answer lies in the heart of every man that ever breathed—a belief in the immortality of life.

Oh, yes, the text book formulas of negation are all admitted, those denials of the complacent materialists who condemn mankind to the finality of the grave, while making a trifling reservation of immortality for themselves.

But no truly great mind seeks to solve the enigma of man's destiny by digging up an ant's nest. The complacence of the scientific mind goes even beyond that of the religious cretin in all serious issues.

For the truth is, all high minds know that they have within them an inextinguishable element. Their love of life is the evidence of their belief in Futurity.

Therefore the quest of such a mind among the ideals of mankind is a quest into the secret passion of its own heart.

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And finding mankind to be what mankind is, aimless and stupid, seeking always its food, the gratification of its senses, its security and its amusements, base or kindly only according to the pressure of its blood, that high quest turns upon itself in bitterness and dismay.

“What, immortality for this mob? Futurity for this human ant bed? A little humanity and kindness sufficient to palliate its vast stupidity and cruelty? A thousand times, No. There is no other end for this thing but the mud from which it sprung!”

And this cry is from an egotism bleeding and in the dust.

“Since there is no Futurity for man, there is no Futurity for me. This is an illusion that I have dreamed, that life might be great, mysterious and beautiful. It is vile and dull. It has no aim, no direction. Eternally renewed, eternally decaying, it has no more significance than the crawling mechanism of the ant, a thing that lives blindly on for ever amid the beauty and terror of space.”

Is it proposed to repudiate this cry of despair from the critic of Life? That remains to be seen.

But first we must find wherein the intellectual effort failed.

The problem of intellectual effort to-day is inseparable from the problem of Nietzsche. Never before has man's thought penetrated so deeply, or searched so high a plane.

It is necessary to discard here all that the English say of Nietzsche. On all serious issues of Life the English are incurably frivolous. They have seriousness only for the lesser problem of existence. The Theological passion with them has always been sociological; the problem of conduct and order. The fear of incurring a social stigma has become for them a code of morality.

It is the communal virtue of the English that they subscribe to all social formulas, while insisting on a high sense of political freedom. In other words, they submit to political slavery in order to maintain an illusion of political liberty.

For this reason they think well on all matters of state removed from human passion. They are equitable and tolerant in Law, Government and Religion. But wherever human conditions impinge upon the social structure, they become furtive and ill at ease. The problems of Birth, Death and Sex they shuffle aside as indecent, and this is the proof that they are unable to attack human morality on the higher plane of passion and necessity. This moral weakness has earned for them the European stigma of Hypocrisy. But this is a racial excuse for spleen. The English are not hypocrites; they are only unable to take the higher problem of morality seriously.

But we must remove all questions of intellect from racial animosity. The English are mentioned here only because they have been loudest in repudiating Nietzsche.

We know where Nietzsche succeeded. He put a final valuation on all that is base in Humanity. He found that the attack on all high

impulses, even on Life itself, comes also from Life. He found that wherever there was a determined effort on earth to create a high and enduring social state, the obscure emotion of hatred and resentment that is the stimulus of all lower humanity found a vent in attacking and seeking to destroy the higher effort.

One must pause to question the nature of this levelling instinct in the mob. It is too much to say that this attack is mental. Such obscure impulses are moved by a species of necessity. In truth, the effort to level is an effort to alleviate the struggle for existence. All that rises above the level implies effort for those who remain below. And the animal in man wishes most of all to feed itself, and to relax.

But this valuation of a lower and higher humanity had never before been clearly understood. Any effort to explain this phenomena found only an outlet in class distinctions and political division.

We owe to Nietzsche the understanding that the human valuation is physiological as well as psychological. We owe to him the knowledge that the aristocratic standard is fixed by Nature —that the higher impulse lives by necessity also.

Here for the first time was affirmed the aristocracy of Beauty, Gaiety, Uprightness; “all that goes on light feet.”

Wherever the clarity of Nietzsche’s vision rested, it penetrated all that is tawdry and pretentious in the structure of human morality behind which mankind muddles an aimless course between his primitive fear of cold, hunger and darkness, and the retribution of his own tribal

laws. To the tottering fabric of Christianity he delivered a gigantic blow, from which there is no recovery for that debased creed. It matters nothing that the shell of that fabric remains, or that the common mind still wears its trappings. The common mind has always worn the trappings of Christianity, thousands of years before it tagged the name of an obscure Jew to its resentment against all efforts to rise above the level of its dictum that all men are equal in the sight of God.

It is true that for all higher minds, any belief in Christianity, even as a police court formula, was already dead. But Nietzsche affirmed the unspoken conviction of these minds. And it remained for him to complete his gigantic labours by killing God. If God had been even as great as man, he could not have survived the withering derision with which Nietzsche pictured his end—"seated by the fireside, withered, grieved because of his weak legs, weary of the world, weary of will, and one day suffocated by his all too great pity. . . ."

To think clearly on man's destiny, it was first necessary to clear away these mountains of rubbish that man has accumulated in building the human ant nest. Nietzsche destroyed, but that which he destroyed was refuse.

And having paused at the end of these labours, Nietzsche himself was beset by a doubt. . . . Was man's destiny any clearer now that one viewed it free of obstruction?

For me, I cannot approach the inevitable question that must attend the study of Nietzsche's effort without expressing my reverence for this great mind.

I could no more repay my debt to Nietzsche than I could to Shakespeare, Beethoven, or Rubens. Therefore I approach the one point of his failure with all humility. Failure is too strong a word, perhaps. A mind that did so much for Life cannot have failed. But I believe there was a point where something wilful, something exasperated, made Nietzsche speak obscurely. And this obscurity, wherein he seemed to speak most definitely, gave an excuse and a justification to certain base human impulses.

It is a child's argument that credits Nietzsche with the responsibility of the German mind. Mankind has yet to learn that no one can be responsible for an act save he who does it.

Having destroyed, Nietzsche sought to replace. He failed to see that in giving to life his own intellectual effort he had already replaced something beyond comparison with that which he took away.

But it is the evidence of all high effort that it wishes to give more than effort. It wishes to leave the creation of its work in order to help others create.

The impetus of Nietzsche's effort had been intellectual; a vast stimulus to all intellects that had eyes to read him with. And he left this higher direction in order to step down to a lower plane—he allowed the political to impinge upon the intellectual—he allowed the procedure of existence to take precedence of Life.

One must bear in mind always in relation to Nietzsche's thought that he never allowed it to falter from the problem of man's destiny **on**

Earth. Futurity to him was the futurity of earthly man; eternal recurrence the eternal recurrence of earthly life.

It has already been noted that this conviction brought Nietzsche to despair. He found that the process of existence did not advance, he found even that at times it retrogressed. At certain rare periods, man had been greater, more productive, more upright than at others. But always these spasmodic efforts had lapsed, died away, and been replaced by inertia. Therefore there was borne upon him the conviction that if there was any hope for man, man must dedicate his will to that higher effort. "Man is something that must be surpassed," he cried in despair.

From thence his hopelessness turned even to the past for hope. The Greek had willed the higher effort once—could not the future will it also? But in whose hands place the mission of regeneration? In those of the thinker? No, he may create the idea, he cannot put it into action. The very necessity of action, if the event touches an earthly issue, finds its solution in the man of action.

If the stupid, blind, resentful mob could not find a direction, it must be given one. And the end of that direction must be to create a great tradition of earthly life, to offer the highest achievement to effort, to build the great and enduring Human State.

At intervals the earth has seen certain men rise by an indomitable power of will and personality, who have been able to impose themselves on their kind as leaders and masters. These alone among all the types of human effort

have been able briefly to shape the conditions of the state which they command. Then it must be to one of these, some future conqueror with a great human ideal, that one offered the mission of forcing mankind to become upright, courageous, strong and beautiful.

It was a high dream, but a vain dream. It presupposed that power over others is given to those worthy of power. It never is, for those truly worthy of power disdain to use it. It remains for the half-minds, the vainer and duller egoisms, to seize the reins of man's destiny.

The soldier, the conqueror, is never an intellect. Napoleon! How could Nietzsche have mistaken this arrogant, destructive little beast for a great man! What more is needed to make such a creature but foresight, cunning, a colossal vanity, and an indestructible persistence.

In truth, the uproar and dust of such a passage of events blinds and deafens man to any true sense of their significance. Size is still mistaken on earth for greatness; disturbance for importance.

The moral significance of any deed, thought, or work must be in its message to Life. And what did this combination of actor, business man, politician, and beast give to man but the assurance that any others of his kind, given the opportunity, might gorge themselves with power and vanity at the expense of a few hundred thousand human lives.

I can only believe that Nietzsche found his superman there in a spirit of malice and exasperation. One must turn to supposition for the

reason of such a choice. Nietzsche lived in a bad period among a bad people. You place a part of German corruption at Nietzsche's door. I retort to you that it was the German who corrupted Nietzsche. No man detested the dull egotism of these German boors as Nietzsche did; no man heaped such scorn upon them; no man, before the war or since, has levelled at them such a terrible accusation: these blond beasts whose primal instinct of hatred has driven them from the beginning of history to attack human civilization. "The will to power." "The will to conquest." Did the German parrot echo these cries from Nietzsche, or did Nietzsche echo them from the German? A great mind may outstrip its generation, but something of the mud of passage will cling to it. The action of all mental effort owes an obscure stimulus to those elements of its generation that react upon all mental effort.

We turn from these minor considerations again to the direction of Nietzsche's intellectual effort. It was his passionate love for Life that made him desire that man might become as great as man might conceive himself to be. In truth, it was a dream that man might become as great as man's thoughts, man's works. It was in striving to believe that on earth the physical aspect of life might become as beautiful as a work of art.

And it seems to me that here, and nowhere else, Nietzsche mistook the road of man's destiny.

His search did not lead him to the one enduring element of man's life—which is creative

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effort, but to that which is least durable—the created state.

Again let it be said that there can be nothing permanent to Life that is built on the service of Existence. To govern a multitude well does not mean that either the ruler or the ruled become higher men; it only means that they lead a better ordered Existence. Even if we could create the perfect state, a state where laws were just, the burden of toil equally distributed, the architecture beautiful, and the struggle for existence reduced to a minimum; even if we could banish from this state half the stress of pain and disease, mankind would still be no greater; man would only become a more comely and graceful creature.

For the earth already teaches us this lesson. Greatness of effort, creative effort, survives the greatest stress that earth can put upon it—survives by reason of the stress upon it.

Imperfect as the history of man is, it presents one indisputable anomaly. With all the vast display of administrative energy, methods of government, codes of morality and conduct, man himself remains unaltered. From the beginning of time, cave man and intellectual man have marched shoulder to shoulder down the centuries. Universal education, universal culture—all this talk is idle. Intellect, wherever it is manifest, arrives without these aids.

One thing alone in existence is manifest, permanent, indestructible, and that is the individual effort to create thought and beauty. This passion to create something finer than the creator himself is the one permanent and enduring element in man, and since creative effort

is the rarest, most difficult achievement, it remains the greatest stimulus to high development—and this development is Life.

And by Life one comprehends an indestructible thing.

But here all intellectual scepticism draws back ashamed. Since the baser mind has never hesitated to claim immortality for itself, how can the higher mind join issue? The pride of intellect alone must disdain immortality shared by hodmen and millionaires. But might not Intellect pause to ask if hodmen and millionaires will be permitted to share the immortality of intellect. *The* immortality, be it understood; for even hodmen and millionaires contain an inextinguishable spark of life, a mere ember, perhaps, as undeveloped as any other protoplasm, but nevertheless, heir to the universal Futurity. It has not developed *here*—Well, it may have the chance to develop *there*.

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WE have travelled with the critic of Life till man's destiny on earth leads to the blind alley of pessimism and despair.

But if one's love for life endure, this moment of despair may turn again to courage, if hardly exaltation.

If there is any man to-day who believes that the object of the eternal struggle for existence will evolve a higher type, an aristocracy of class, nation or race, that man has failed to read the history of mankind. In other words, he is a hopeless optimist.

And the reason for man's failure to achieve a permanent state of existence must be stated. It is essential to effort that existence should be hard, painful and uncertain. It is essential that the *struggle* should endure, for it is by the struggle man develops. If it ceased, and life became perfect—effort would cease; Life would cease.

For Life is effort.

Surely this much is understood. If perfection of earthly life were an end, and therefore possible, man would have achieved it a million years ago. Since a million years has not seen it achieved, the answer returns like a blow. It will never be achieved. And why?

Because the stress of existence is the condition under which the soul of man develops, and it is essential that the stress should endure, in order that each generation should succeed to the same problems, the same difficulties, the

same dangers, the same death. Wars, cataclysms, epidemics, these things are accidents and incidents. The sociological structure is an incident. The one thing that is not accidental or incidental is effort. For this, like life, continues. It does not progress. It continues!

Each generation, striving, questioning, examining, forgets always in the bustle and uproar of existence that every other generation has done the same. It is because effort moves by struggle, by the propinquity of man to man, that mankind has no memory.

Only in stepping aside and looking on from afar may we divine a little how sterile and aimless is the direction of this earthly existence. And only in stepping aside may we divine how deep, mysterious and eternal the impulse of Life is.

If we stop short at the spectacle of man, we stop short at despair.

To step forward with the problem of man's destiny, one must step across the grave.

There is no other way.

To such a statement Materialism sends up its troubled cry of negation. But we understand why the Materialist must repudiate belief in futurity beyond earth. He, most of all, *needs* the pressure of conviction that earth life is an end in itself, for this is his stimulus to make the best of Life.

The ant is his memento mori. He must confound man with all perishable mortality, as the spur to advance from primitivism. But the Materialist is our very evidence of the incom-

plete, preparatory nature of Life on earth. Who but he insists that life here is an end in itself. Who but he proves by centuries of failure that there is no end to reach.

The history of man turns upon him in derision. Its answer is written at large. There is no futurity of accomplishment on earth—no finality. There is no promise even of a better condition by his efforts for future man.

For again let it be repeated, if perfection were possible, life would have achieved its end, and would cease to exist, and the materialist would find his justification in the grave.

Imperfection. Failure. Uncertainty. These are the essentials to earthly Life, by these alone we strive to become Perfect, to Succeed, to remove Doubt. But on earth we never succeed in one of these things. Then does earthly Life exist only in order that we should perpetually strive with Imperfection, Failure, and Uncertainty, and end as a piece of rotten manure?

The proportion of effort has no relation to such an obscure finality. If you find an end in themselves in Imperfection and Failure, you are a great simpleton.

They are a beginning, no more.

To sum up:

To be great, a thing must endure, and be a stimulus to fresh effort, higher development.

There can be no real greatness of race, no greatness of state, no greatness even of a group, for all groups run to collective action, which is negation of action.

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There can be ~~no~~ greatness only in the individual effort! 25

For states, groups, nations, races, move by the ephemeral pressure of present necessity. Their condition as a life element is as unstable as water. If a nation rises to political power, it can leave no more behind it as a mark of eminence than the creative effort of a few individual men.

These alone carry the thread of upward life, for without the effort of higher minds, common minds would all relax back to the animal.

And the impulse of this high effort, having achieved its aim of raising the standard of earthly effort; of keeping alive the problem of effort—has accomplished its mission on earth. But the problem of its own individual effort has only begun. On earth, it has acquired the impetus of fresh effort.

THE CREATIVE STIMULUS

IF creative effort is the one human achievement by which man surpasses man; if creative effort is the one thing that endures; if the creative effort is the stimulus to fresh effort; then the creative effort is Morality in the highest.

And this Morality finds a direction for Life.

It would seem that there is something of arrogance here, something that excludes the greater portion of mankind. But mankind is included so far that its development also depends on its power to assimilate and understand the higher effort.

For we may best define the power of a creative effort by its cumulative effect on humanity.

And this effect is brought about by the stimulus of mind on mind; by the germination of thought from thought.

That entity which we call self, or soul, or mind is that which is able to perceive a higher perfection of Life than life on earth can offer. But in order to arrive at such a higher perception it must be able also to record a profound perception of Life on earth.

To record perception by the senses has least to do with this process. The senses are automatic things, functioning by the necessity to exist. In themselves, they cannot be developed; the mind alone can develop a higher power to perceive by them. And this process, which is one of Definition by Observation, is not auto-

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matic at all, but arrives by a prolonged effort of development.

It is by the power to Observe, to Define, and finally, to Create, that mind is expressed on earth. And that mind which Creates, sets in motion the power to observe and define in lesser minds.

By the power to Give, and the ability to Take, mind is developed on earth.

For mind, we see clearly, is *not* a universal quality common to all men, but the individual development of a few exceptional men.

These few carry forward the whole problem of human consciousness, and since their effect on the lesser mind will be one of education by imitation we have some reason to understand the confusion that attends this process on earth.

All that which is Academic, Decorative, Scientific in the Arts; all that belongs to Scholarship, Connoisseurship, or Aestheticism; all that arrives by critical perception, or the mere technical record by Observation will express mind in the process of developing.

Later, an effort may be made to separate the Creative Power which stimulates from the Imitative impulse which is stimulated. At present the procedure must be left at a statement, whose aphorism is:

You perceive the beauty of this work of Art. Then this work has taught you to perceive its beauty.

It must be understood that if we define this process we do not deprecate it. In a lesser degree its effect is one of stimulus by example also.

Without the activity of these talkers, interpreters and disciples, the message of creative effort might fail to reach mankind; therefore, all those who make it their business to seek Art, build storehouses to preserve it, and hand down to posterity its stimulus in example, do an inestimable service to mankind. That they preserve in this way also vast stores of rubbish is inevitable, for as uncertainty of the future must be the highest incentive to all morality and effort, so what is truly great in Art must also remain uncertain. To fix the standard would be to depreciate all fresh effort.

To measure even vaguely the stimulus of Great Art, and therefore its morality, one need only take three great creative minds—Praxiteles, Shakespeare and Beethoven—and strive to imagine what intellectual effort would be without them. In truth, the creative effort which stirs millions of minds to a sudden sense of beauty, passion, the vital things of sense;—there is no measuring the immensity of such a gift to Life.

These great minds rise above considerations of Art. They give a meaning to Life by expressing their own vital sense of Life. By already going beyond Life on earth, they are a connection with Life beyond earth.

If this is not understood, then there is no meaning in their achievement, and the man who invented the steam engine is more important than Shakespeare.

That the steam engine is more important to you, my materialist friend, I do not doubt. It carries your body about swiftly, and you believe that human effort can serve no greater end.

THE CREATIVE STIMULUS.

You have not yet realized that if the higher Creative effort had not been made, the steam engine would have carried a body with the soul of a mud fish.

But the materialist who takes a higher plane than mere utility still insists that the achievement of mind is sufficiently explained as a stimulus to earthly development as an end in itself.

Good soul, do you see what this fine theory implies?

It claims that the gigantic and sustained effort of higher man to develop *beyond the conditions of earth life* can have *no* other end than to stimulate development in a few savages also.

The savage is not worth such an effort. And even if this were the aim and end of the creative impulse, what effort could be more brutal and stupid than that which forced a higher perception of life on man *in order* that he should suffer the pain of never realizing it.

It is *not* by doing away with the difficulty and pain of earth life that mind is developed. It is by encountering difficulty and pain we develop. Therefore that power of mind which is able to vitalize us to a sense of Life, will vitalize us also to a sense of pain and exaltation. Life itself is the material; Mind is its analysis. What stupidity is that which supposes the struggle to exist on earth can be an end in itself, when it is so imperfect a condition that man himself *is able* to devise a better plan, though he has no power to enforce it on the primitivism of nature.

It is just this eternal effort to reach a better condition of life that demonstrates the essential

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imperfection of Earth. For this gives a minimum of material whereby man may achieve the conquest of Mind.

Five senses, and the function of Sex. These are the gift of earth to man. On this miserly equipment, supported by a physical mechanism which is so imperfect that it must be constantly fed and guarded—which an atom of decayed matter may destroy utterly, man is faced with the problem of beginning his development on earth.

The well-being of his existence is in what power he may have to cultivate his senses, refine his perception of actuality, and gather about him things which are pleasant to see, touch, taste, hear, and smell, and their essential stimulus are pain, disease, cold, hunger and death.

But the development of mind goes on by quite another process, and that, once and again, is the perception of a Perfection that goes quite beyond the primitive stimulus of the senses, and which is expressed by the Creative effort of man.

It is just because of the interminable struggle, danger, and uncertainty of existence that fear drives man to find most importance in the thing that seems to alleviate his hard conditions.

No one questions that the scientist who discovered an anaesthetic for pain confers an immense boon on existence. But the spiritual gain is nil. One does right to reverence the concentrated effort of those humanitarians who spend their lives seeking an antidote to pain and dis-

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tress. Our respect for the effort, and our gratitude for its effects, must not permit us to forget that this service remains one to the body, not to the mind.

But to pursue this theme must lead only to repetition. If material good—the advancement of the social structure, the humanising of the white savage—if these are accepted as an end, then there is no explanation of the higher intellectual impulse to create. And it has already been said that but for this impulse, man would still be a primitive—a savage.

It must be remembered that from whatever aspect life is taken—whether as the mere struggle for existence, or as the higher impulse that goes beyond the struggle—Belief counts for nothing.

Effort alone counts.

Believe truly if you will that this earth life is an end in itself. You do better than the coward who claims paradise as the reward of his inability to face the problems of earth.

For this paradox is thrust on all who love Life. He who believes in the eternity of life must thrust his belief away, lest in contemplating the future his effort for to-day may relax.

THE ARISTOCRATIC AFFIRMATION

TO state in plain terms that the Creative effort marks the highest achievement of man is to state an Aristocratic value. And if it can be understood that the Creative effort expresses a spiritual and moral development which goes beyond life on earth, then the artist, the poet, the musician and the thinker are already the aristocrats of the Future.

Such a statement deserves to rouse the anger of all common minds.

“What, common minds by the million, and this handful of writers and artists to claim precedence—to claim for themselves the meaning of Life; the reward of Futurity!

“Execration on such vile egotism. Is it not sufficient that we buy their pictures, read their poems, applaud their music, make a State which gives them an opportunity to practise their art, that they should take our money, our patronage, our appreciation even, and climb over our heads withal! If the reward of futurity is for them, that handful, what is *our* reward—the reward for us, the million?”

Let us propitiate this clamour of wounded self-esteem.

There is no claim made here to reward, for no man dare claim reward for effort. What man *may* claim is the power to advance by effort. And if this advance is already far beyond common humanity on earth, it will still be far beyond when it leaves the earth.

THE ARISTOCRATIC AFFIRMATION.

What have we to do with those who divide mankind into Good and Bad? Our division is between the predetermined effort to develop and the predetermined refusal to develop.

We have nothing to do with the procedure that arranges for a place in futurity and a crown of glory because it chooses to play a child's game of rules and ritual on earth.

The people's morality is that which seeks to maintain unaltered a condition of mind already formulated by other minds. And this procedure is the negation of effort. It is maintained by certain officials, who take upon themselves the problem of thinking for the people.

Statesmen, Soldiers, Law-makers and Priests. These are the people's great men.

These, it seems, carry the thread of common consciousness down the centuries, and when we turn to examine the material of their consciousness, we remain only astonished.

Its action is concerned with the movement and migration of races, peaceful or warlike, brought about by the ever changing pressure of population on the food supply.

Its mentality is expressed by precept and ritual; for the most part, arid formulas concerning custom and conduct, made in the childhood of races, and parroted down the centuries by mechanical voices.

By these rules, it is claimed, Man has arrived from Primitivism.

That is perhaps true, but he has stopped exactly where he arrived, a step from Primitivism.

For consider this. If you still repeat mechanically rules laid down by tribal law-givers in

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the dawn of history, you are *still* in the dawn of history. Time, which is not the passage of years, but the passage of mind, has stood still with you.

We turn away from this procedure of conduct and affairs.

It is no more than the static condition by which man exists on earth, unaltered and unalterable. Mind is a condition that goes on apart from it, and beyond it. That element which we call consciousness is aroused by the effort which *detaches* itself from the people's morality, even if its material is the common procedure of existence on earth.

Indeed, it is just by the power to visualize this procedure, and place its vision in form, that consciousness expresses itself. *Because* it is something different and apart from the common mentality, it is able to analyse and express its vision of Life. And this power to express vitalizes Life, because it brings consciousness to the mere mechanical function of existing.

You who resent the aristocratic affirmation, and believe Life to be the ordering of affairs and conduct, be pleased to consider this.

A deed does not exist unless it is recorded. Even the material which you pile up as an aid to existence, the slow cultivation of the senses, the slow understanding of even physical conditions, all this exists as a blind process unless it is placed before you in a form by which you can appreciate and apply its use.

For the savage has your senses, your opportunity to exercise them. Then why does he remain a savage?

THE ARISTOCRATIC AFFIRMATION.

Because he has no tradition of mind by which he may arrive from savagery. And the tradition of Mind is maintained by Art.

It is not sufficient to chronicle facts, for a fact is not Art; is not even history. All those people who make it their business to record facts, events, the history of the struggle for existence, the accumulation of physical evidences, the observation of natural conditions—all this industry serves to help us to use earthly material, or to compare yesterday with to-day. It has a use, but not a great one.

The true history of man is the history of Mind.

It is by expressing his own inward vision that the creative mind keeps alive the problem of each individual existence.

And only a great creative mind is able to record his vision of the emotion, beauty, and sense of life in a manner that can impress the memory of mankind.

For the Fact, the Deed, the Emotion, the Thought, can have no moral value unless it is recorded so that all may understand it.

It must have style, emphasis, conviction; and only the creative vision can give it these things.

It is a fact to state that Macbeth murdered Duncan. But the moral significance of the fact lies in the creative power that can expose the murderer's soul, and make you, too, participate in the horror of a vile act.

It is a fact, you say, that women are beautiful. But how do you know that you would ever have known the beauty of women if Art had not pressed upon you the artist's higher vision of it.

CREATIVE EFFORT.

Before you repudiate the claims of Creative effort, ask yourself how much of your own there is in *your* vision of Life, and how much you owe to the higher vision of others. And if you cannot find humanity here, stand aside; the Creative effort of man has no message for you.

You may, if it please your positivism, say that the brain of man is an accident. You may shut your eyes to the enigma of Time and Space. You may repudiate the belief that there are other worlds peopled by human souls—you may grub up the ants' nest for a solution of man's destiny—you may deride as you will man's claim to eternity, but you cannot deny your debt to man's vast achievement, for if you do, the denial stamps upon you the evidence of a base mind.

I do not say that you may hide from the problem of man's destiny behind a creed. To you, Protestant or Catholic, Mahomedan or Jew—all you who accept the gift of life by grovelling on your knees, one can have nothing to say. You have already repudiated your debt to man by offering your thanks to God!

But you, my materialistic friend, for I love you, in spite of your passion for ant beds, you, I say, exist by the strivings of minds that rose above materialistic things. The problem of Life that you accept so casually was made for you by higher minds, the thoughts you think are borrowed thoughts—even the woman you love was created for you by the dreams of poets and artists.

If the Creative effort had not been made, your solution of material causes would still crawl on its belly, like the savage it is.

THE ARISTOCRATIC AFFIRMATION.

For what is consciousness but ability to receive impressions from the conditions that surround Mind, and how can impression be received unless understanding is made sensitive to that which makes conditions. And that which sensitizes is knowledge of human passion, the perception of beauty from ugliness, the power to refine the senses till they respond to delicacy of form, colour and sound, and finally the power to shape the perception of all these things into a form higher and greater than the material of Life that inspires them.

By these roads alone consciousness is spread from mind to mind. And that consciousness reaches highest which is able to posit a perception of Perfection in Passion, Beauty, Form and Sensation, which goes beyond any evidence of these elements on earth.

It cannot be repeated too often that to understand affairs is not to understand life. Priests and politicians know least of life, for these leaders of the people *are* the people. Consciousness with them has never got beyond relating conduct to the affairs of existence, and this problem, again be it said, is only the first step from primitivism. A thousand leagues beyond this is the consciousness that has absorbed the human problem, accepted it, and passed on to the problem of its individual development, the final expression of which is Creative art, and this is so far from primitivism that it is already a step beyond Life on Earth.

THE DIRECTION

THE effort of Creative Art, Creative thought, is for higher mankind also. That is understood.

But in achieving the Creative effort, the creator has already gone beyond mankind.

He has outstripped his fellows in the race for development.

He has made his statement, given us his inner vision, taught us to know human passion, exaltation, despair, gaiety, and beauty. He has brought home to us some understanding of those mystic things, Light and Spirit.

And then, you say, he dies.

Then why the Achievement of his effort?

In order that mankind may still go on achieving endlessly, aimlessly?

In order that few should strive eternally to bring each generation of mankind to a sense of the serious things of Life, so that it, too, might die, aimlessly, endlessly?

In truth, such a supposition touches the very abyss of absurdity.

It is to throw man back utterly to the animal, for if there is no end, no direction in the restless striving of mankind, why torture the mind with the enigma of the Universe? Better a thousand times to serve only the impulse to seek food and satisfy lust, for these are a sufficient reward, if the Grave is the end of Life.

Why, the Aesthetic Materialist, in his insistence that the service of Art ends with its Earthly value as a stimulus to civilization already negatives the civilizing effect of Art.

THE DIRECTION.

For his theory of decorative values is hardly a foot's breadth from the primitive, the animal.

It is the Decorative valuer that insists that Creative effort is not to enlighten, but to adorn

In other words, Praxiteles gives us the Venus de Milo as a garden ornament, Shakespeare lays bare the soul of Hamlet for an evening's amusement, and Beethoven gives us the 5th Symphony in order that the ear may enjoy a few sonorous chords on the piano.

But one has no more patience with those simpletons and sensation mongers.

The Giants of Creative effort do *not* labour for the puerile end of man's entertainment. To say that the appreciation of an audience is a sufficient reward for the artist is to say in homely terms that one breeds a racehorse to draw a night-cart.

The effect of great Art upon other minds is important as a stimulus to the artist, and as a means of refining those minds, but it still leaves the artist poorly thanked.

Do you suppose high minds work for the aggrandisement conferred upon them by inferior minds? Do you think the appreciation of inferior minds can reward the effort of superior minds?

Do you think that the lesser element of consciousness which is called into being by Creative consciousness can turn upon its creator with an air of patronage?

Understanding this, do you still find it an intolerable arrogance that claims Creative Effort as the one aristocratic human value?

What, then, is the accusation that must return upon you, Christian and Materialist, all

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you who subsist on the mental effort already made by others; who would have no power to perceive if other minds had not defined for you; who rise and fall only as the wave of Creative Consciousness reaches or recedes from you, and who yet claim, by right of your inert millions, that the meaning of Life is vindicated by you?

GOOD AND EVIL

If we define the Creative effort as the highest morality what, then, is the extreme of the Creative effort—the greatest evil?

In truth, we must move cautiously here, for we move in a dark place. To reach a finality one must reach to an unknown terror, a black abyss beyond the conception of earthly vision.

Nietzsche has given us a valuation of earthly morality that cannot be impugned, but his definition still remains one touching only the struggle for existence. To have done this was a great gift to man; the greatest in moral values yet made on earth.

This valuation of Good makes for all uprightness in the face of reality, courage to attack the problem of existence, beauty to adorn it, clarity of thought to make it orderly, clean, just and dignified.

In his own words: “a divine tact and taste” in all things earthly.

And Evil is all that attacks this process, disorder, mob resentment, the revolt of the slave, the chandala, the pariah.

Nietzsche searched the history of events and morals in order to lay bare the strivings of these two impulses, which have existed side by side since the dawn of civilization, which exist side by side to-day.

And his hope was that higher man might some day, by an effort of will, force upon mankind the ideal of cleanliness, order and good taste.

CREATIVE EFFORT.

But his knowledge of mankind told him that this effort would never be made—that this effort was beyond man.

And his knowledge, again be it said, brought Nietzsche to despair.

But is it permissible to say that the inevitability of all earthly failure to make earthly life an end in itself, brings us to the conviction that it is not intended that earthly life should be such an end?

Is it permissible to say that our optimism begins only in the conviction of this pessimism?

There is no understanding of, nor meaning for earthly Life, unless it can be accepted as a probation, a test, a breeding ground for effort.

All the muddle, turmoil, confusion; all this eternal setting out with a great uproar of optimism to go nowhere; all the material of emotion, exaltation, despair, love, hatred, humanity, cruelty,—all this is a part of the test placed upon endurance and upon the survival of the Intellectual effort.

It is in what power we have to clarify our thought, understand the mechanism of human action, define the emotions of the human heart, see clearly the course of affairs, place a value on effort, understand the tradition of thought, and, above all, place our vision of these things in Creative form, in order to preserve it for others, that we survive the test of life, begin our development, and by the accumulated force of effort prepare for the next and greater test of achievement Beyond Earth.

One must use this phrase. There is no other direction towards the higher effort than across the grave, not in it. But this direction leads from the problem of evil.

It is undoubtedly true that the attack of all obscure, cowardly and mean impulses in the mob is against all that appears stable, upright, and dignified, but the attack here is less of evil than of baseness.

It may be the instrument of Evil, but not Evil itself. For the mob's baseness has this justification, that the struggle for existence gives it little choice of higher impulses. Existence—necessity—is the problem here, not Life. One cannot expect gifts from those who have nothing to give, prodigality from beggars, greatness of heart from those whose hearts are in their bellies.

The best that humanity can give to existence are the human virtues of kindness, tolerance, and good humour. The greater mass of humanity has these virtues, which are its defence against all that is hard in the struggle for existence.

But the lesser mob is without them, and this lack constitutes its baseness.

The impulse of Hatred is from a sense of inferiority, a poverty of human cheerfulness. Chance only selects its direction. The Christian, the Bolshevik; these animals are haters first, fanatics or demagogues after.

They are ugly, dirty, base, it is true; but not truly evil—they are too stupid for that. For an element to be evil, it must also be cunning,

powerful, and capable of great destructiveness.

The base human animals may do harm to the structure of Society—to Existence, as much harm as they are able. They would, if possible, smash all that is orderly, decent, and beautiful in its structure; they would, if possible, drag the greater and more tolerant mass of mankind down to their own level, but since that level is in its disorder an attack upon existence, the greater mob will never permit it.

Humanity will keep a certain level of justice and order, because it *must*.

There is no will here, no conscious effort. Necessity rules—the necessity of bare existence.

The Christian did a great deal of damage; but his attack failed, or the world would now be a shambles, where dog ate dog to the extinction of the last dog. The attack that the world has been resisting, the attack of that primitive beast, the German, and that primitive beast, the Bolshevik, will be defeated in the end. The rough sense of uprightness in the greater mass of humanity will work for its own protection.

Neither a Jesus, a Robespierre, a Napoleon, a Hohenzollern, a Lenin can upset the structure of existence beyond a certain limit.

Evil is too serious a word to apply to Fanatics, Demagogues, or Imperialistic lunatics. For whatever the battle cry of the attack, the direction of the attack is always the same, and the excuse the same. Whether one leads fanatics in rags, or soldiers in uniform, it is still a mob that is led.

I can find no distinction in the direction of these attacks. Imperialistic dominion on the one hand, Liberty—equality—fraternity on the

other; the effect is always one of vast uproar, confusion, bloodshed, and return to exactly the same conditions—the same bare problem of the struggle for existence.

Only one must not be misled by noise, size, the area of disturbance.

The recent world conflagration was an episode; no more—a vile episode, which has placed a vast stress on courage and endurance, on the virtues which are needed to face the struggle of existence.

They are idiots who find war a natural process of stimulation, and peace a condition of degeneracy. They have failed utterly to see that human warfare is only something added to the eternal warfare of the earthly struggle to endure, and that Peace is a term which has never yet been known on Earth.

But an effort to understand Degeneracy can wait.

It is true that whatever the attack on the stability of existence, man must define it as evil, in order to stir up his anger and courage to resist it.

But evil must be measured by its reach, its aim, its capacity to destroy the highest.

Therefore its attack must be in an effort to pervert, mislead, and destroy the Creative impulse.

And this attack is so hidden, so subtle, so profound that one may not even be aware of its existence.

If the impulse of high effort leads to beyond earth Life, its impulse must also come from beyond earth Life.

CREATIVE EFFORT.

And the highest attack upon it must also come from beyond earth life.

Here one must pause, for no earthly mind can take upon itself the right to prescribe damnation for another mind. We have had enough of the "worm of sin" already on this earth; the prescriptions of the "good and just" who have forced mankind to martyrdom to satisfy their own spleen and vanity.

In truth, all those poor devils who tortured themselves over a conviction of sin were a little presumptuous. They arrogated to themselves an importance hardly justified by their lack even of vice.

The powers of evil have higher game in view than rats and mice and such small deer.

Good and Evil is hardly a problem for simple minds, those who at most break a rule or two of conduct. They are not even asked to face this problem. There can be no failure for those who have nothing to achieve.

But there can be a failure for those who, given the creative gift, ~~and who~~ refuse to create. For them is reserved the greater reward, the greater penalty. And surely this is just.

So you, my good friend the materialist, who were so annoyed at the presumption of aristocratic claims of intellect, be pleased to retract a little. You will find safety in repudiating any right to a higher Fate.

For there is an escape from the problem of man's destiny, and that is in the security of him who saves himself by fleeing from battle. And your reward will be his, too, as safe, as inglorious.

Your safety lies in the maxim of all who bow to the struggle for existence. "Do no harm, do no good, for both disturb the struggle."

Your effort reaches no further than this on earth.

Your effort will take you little further when you leave the earth.

But in its higher aspect, the problem of Evil becomes a part of the problem of Life.

One cannot define life, one can only define what serves life—the Creative effort.

One cannot define Evil, one can only define what it may attack,—the Creative effort.

Therefore the only direction in which one can resist evil is by Creating.

Every effort that is given mankind in the way of high thought, beauty, poetic vision, the understanding of passion—is in the stimulus it adds to life a triumph over evil.

A little only may one divine of the pressure of evil on the Creative spirit, in studying certain expressions of the higher mind. For why are these always conscious of the tragedy of life, the apparent futility of effort, always sceptical, pessimistic of human progress, always dragged at in achievement by a sense of the mutability of life.

Complacent egotists have no sense of the dark spectre of Failure that dogs all high effort. It is only the little aesthetes, who are pompous and assured in exploiting their talent. They have no doubts, no indecisions; they have a delightful occupation.

But the Creative impulse moves under a gigantic oppression.

CREATIVE EFFORT.

It is true that it has the compensation of Exaltation—an emotion also unknown to little artists.

The Giants of Creative effort resist—they produce—they leave an imperishable wealth of stimulus to other minds. But how much of the Creative effort may have failed—not produced—submitted to the power of Evil!

There is much to be said for the higher aspect of the struggle for existence. By civil morality, by creating order, by resisting the attack of disorder, in short, by preserving itself, it may also present a shield against the attack of Evil.

By removing the stress of Existence, it may give the higher impulse a better field to develop in.

Yet we must pause even here, as one must pause even at the utter condemnation of Evil.

Without pain, how can we understand exaltation?

Without ugliness, where is the foil of beauty?

Without Evil how can one understand Good?

Always one is brought back to a final statement of belief.

Pain and Exaltation, Beauty and Ugliness, Good and Evil, these are all part of the Test.

Without them there is no development—no leap upwards into the gigantic problem of Futurity.

DEATH

If we alter the significance of Life to Effort, and understand that high effort already goes beyond Earth, then death ceases to have significance as a finality.

It becomes an episode; a change; even an adventure.

We speak of death as a finality only because we are muddled by its earthly chemistry. And we add to this an equally muddled sense of its earthly spirituality.

But neither of these aspects is significant or important.

The problem is first of all one of duality. Death is the essential emphasis to Life, as Ugliness is the essential emphasis to Beauty. We need these rough contrasts on Earth to stir our sluggish consciousness into action.

In truth, the paucity of earthly symbols forces us to impose too many meanings on one symbol. The confusion of earthly thought is due to the limited nature of earthly expression.

See by this limitation what stupidities we have forced in the word Life, which we have made synonymous with action—movement.

A plant has movement, but it is not alive. An ant is alive, but it has not life. And though the human body for a period contains life on earth, in itself it is no more alive than any other mechanical organism.

Life is that which defines and commands the body's action. When action is called into being by mere contact with the senses we are still not justified in calling this procedure life.

CREATIVE EFFORT.

An animal is capable of experiencing rage, fear, and the sexual impulse. But these go no deeper than a protective mechanism, acquired by necessity, just as certain plants acquire a capacity for growing thorns to protect themselves against being eaten.

All such mechanical action stops development at the point that gives it just sufficient protection against extinction.

We define Life as Consciousness, and consciousness is the extreme antithesis of all blind, brutal earth mechanisms that are moved to action by contact only with the senses.

To confuse Mind with these spasmodic and accidental growths from the primeval slime of earth is a species of Bedlamite humanitarianism, as a natural result of which we arrive at the transmigration of souls and other Oriental cobweb spinning.

Fortunately the mission of intellectual development was not entrusted to the East, or who knows into what dark hole it would have fallen.

Half the repugnance we feel for Death is its association with Pain.

But Pain is the process of living. Automatically it ceases with Death. Wherever Death may lead to it must take us beyond the malady of nerves, and at least we have the consolation of knowing that no final departure can be quite as painful as a prolonged toothache.

Furthermore, we have chosen to add horror to the natural process of Decay by calling it Disease. And here we may console ourselves by noting that nearly all disease is a condition

of the social structure. It is by herding humanity together under unnatural conditions that these infections and inoculations are passed through a community. They have been imposed on the natural process of decay by man's stupidity, dirtiness, laziness, and lack of foresight.

There is only one of these inoculations that man *must* take seriously, and that is syphilis.

If there is any meaning in the word Death, this disease is Death in Life. He who contracts it is a living corpse.

He cannot produce Life, but Death.

His blood will poison the unborn. Worse than that, it will poison the very springs of Life, for this disease alone attacks and destroys Mind.

Time and inoculation do *not* destroy this disease.

It feeds always on new blood.

Whatever gifts of Creative power and Perception Life gives to man are killed by syphilis. He who contracts it has stopped Mind in its course of development down the centuries. It is the one great destroyer; the weapon forged by man's stupidity which he has handed to the powers of Evil for his own destruction.

Some day, necessity will force man to take this horror seriously. At present the prevalence of the profession of Doctor is the evidence of our frivolity and indifference to it.

We put aside any moral significance in the mere failure of bodily mechanism which we call Death.

CREATIVE EFFORT.

If there were no higher reason, Death is an episode too casual, too accidental, to be in itself a finality.

It is important to be born, for thus we acquire Life.

It is important to grow for a period on Earth, for thus we acquire experience.

But having grown, it does not matter when we chance to die.

It is perhaps happiest to die in full manhood, so that we have realized the physical aspects of Life, developed mind, and, if possible, completed work; but even old age, stupid and sterile, may be an experience worth having.

To suppose that an accident like Death may be a finality to Life is to admit a strange lack of perspective, forced on man by the constant pre-occupation with the spirit of Earth, which is the spirit of sadness and decay. But decay is no more than the earthly symbol of regeneration.

Death, in short, is Birth.

We have to thank the Mystics for hedging about this normal function a sense of incredibility. All talk of the soul's departure to realms of eternal light and love: all imagery derived from a dramatic sunrise and the flight of birds: all metaphysical arithmetic dealing with unities and dualities and trinities (*Alas, O Plato!*); all bottomless pits and endless spaces; in short, all frenzied efforts to tag known symbols to unknowable conditions can be surely dissipated in a breath.

Why should the change from this life to the next be any more stupendous than the arrival of Life on Earth.

Do we need all this staggering jumble of symbolism and mystery to bring a baby to life here? Is there anything we are more prosaic about?

If there is an induction, it perhaps points to a nurse and doctor on the other side of the grave, too.

There was no need to pile mysteries at the door of Death, for Death is the Unknown, and will always be mysterious.

We make this journey through the undiscovered country in the human mind. Find, then, the road to yourself, and you will find an easy road to Death.

The Christian, first brother to the Primitive, has placed Fear also at the door of Death.

But no fine mind fears to die. The moment of departure will always find it unafraid.

Love of Life is *not* at its extreme the Fear of Death.

To fear Death is only to love the senses, and the senses are not life, but the body.

These little sensualists and belly gods do very well on earth. Their shudders at Death are so many expressions of delight in the gastric process and the charm of fornication. They join issue with the pig that screams at the smell of the butcher.

Wherever mind is most earthly, which is to be most depressed, nervous and uncertain, there must be fear of death, for these are the conditions of fear.

And when to these conditions of dullness and morbidity we add hatred, we have the bad mind's fear of death, which it seeks to alleviate by exasperation against Life.

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All that is Puritanic, distrustful, cold and unresponsive to beauty, gaiety, and happiness; all that rejects because it has no courage to accept, expresses a vindictiveness whose basis is Fear.

All Hatred springs from Fear, and all Fear has its final root in the Terror of Death.

Perhaps there is something ulterior in this Hatred of Life which tells the bad mind to fear the moment of physical extinction; for the problem of Evil, also, goes beyond death.

But at such a point supposition must cease. The world has suffered too much already from the spleen of that Good God, who in Nietzsche's phrase "built up his Hell for the delight of those he loved best."

Death, whatever else it may lead to, is the great automatic adjustment of human values

If Creative effort is the expression of ascending Life—the Destructive impulse, Evil, is the expression of something that descends.

More than that one has no right to say.

It is only in the social, the personal aspect of Death that we exaggerate its significance by the pain of separation.

We suffer the paradox of Grief, the most selfish of all emotions that attacks only the unselfish heart.

But even here our Fear canonizes the Dead as martyrs—forgetting that it is we who are martyrs to the Dead.

The problem of Death is one for the Living, not the Dead. They have escaped its eternal

threat, so perhaps there is a trace of envy also in our tears.

This much only must one recall seriously in recalling the inevitability of Death. Without it the pressure of necessity for effort would relax.

Our childish, imperfect human mechanism needed this stimulus—the instability, the shortness of earthly life impresses an inordinate sense of the passage, the value of Time.

All who renounce effort devote themselves to forgetting Death, to forgetting the passage of Time—even to arresting the passage of Time.

The passionate regret for youth, strength, beauty, for sensation, is implanted in these hearts. Their love for their own Past is the admission of how little they have to offer the Future.

But since effort, achievement, increases with the passage of years, no mind that loves its work would wish to return again to the meagre accomplishment of its youth. The gifts of maturity—clarity of thought, breadth of vision, capacity to create—who would barter these for the satisfaction of a little extra sensation, a little extra entertainment?

For all who know that High Effort is not spasmodic or accidental, but a predetermined development, know that an episode so spasmodic and accidental as Death cannot affect its direction.

To love Life, to love achievement, brings its final conviction. Life is so well worth facing, because it is so well worth leaving.

MAN AND GOD

ALL belief in life begins by denying a belief in God. *For God is the emblem of man's irresponsibility*, his childishness, his cowardice. It represents his desire to shelve the problem of Life, to thrust the burden of it from his own shoulders.

Prayer is Fear, the admission of weakness, the refusal to attack Effort.

Thanksgiving is the mendicant's whine of praise for an unearned gift.

Life demands effort of man, and he who succeeds in Effort, and thanks God, is only thanking himself.

Belief in God is only a trick for shelving the problem of belief.

Those who say, "Oh, God is a good fellow, I need not worry about him," say in their hearts, "I am a good fellow, I need not worry about myself."

Those who say "God is Great, Terrible, Full of Vengeance! I fear Him," express only their secret fear and exasperation with man.

They seek to propitiate this Terrible God by directing his vindictiveness at others.

To believe in a God, a Force, an Exterior Will that shapes Life to some hidden purpose is not only to place the responsibility of one's own will upon that belief, but to find oneself up the blind alley of Predestination.

And all who have courage and love Life will renounce Predestination as the worst of all evils.

Orientalism fell into this dark pit some thousands of years ago and has never clambered out since.

Does this explain why the East produces no great men? The whole collective effort of the East could not have written Beethoven's 5th Symphony.

If there is Race in these things, God rules the East; for only the West has dared to defy Destiny, to defy God—that is, to create Great Art.

Devotion to God is atheism to Life.

All roads to God lead from man. All roads from man lead from Life. As it is in his individual effort that man serves Life, so the greater effort will always deny God, who is the enemy of Life.

If you still wish to accept God as a symbol, you must find him, as the Greeks did, in man.

That good and kindly people accept a creed, does not vindicate the creed, but the simplicity of good and kindly people.

All one can say is that such people would perhaps be better without a creed, for they would add tolerance to goodness and kindness, and that would be so much gained.

But goodness and kindness, all that is understood by the humanitarian impulse, exist by necessity, as a part of the social structure. It is self protective most where it seeks to protect others. The cunning of the priest has always sought to use this necessity as an excuse for priestly dominance.

As the highest morality is expressed in asserting the individual vision of Life—in going alone, so the lowest morality exists in a general expression of belief, in agreeing to a common

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formula suitable to the lowest intelligence in the community.

It must be understood that belief in a creed exists by an expression of universal inertia. It demands the least mental effort—a complete renunciation of effort.

In short, Faith.

One must not confuse the individual belief in Life with a universal belief in Faith.

Belief at its highest is the effect of understanding, of conviction by scepticism.

But Faith exists by repudiating inquiry, by wilful ignorance, by submission to any will but one's own.

By the road of Faith one arrives at the final Evil—repudiation of Effort.

And this has always been the priestly aim, and his bribe to mankind for relaxing effort, for submission to the priestly will has been to extend absolution to those who submit, or in other words, who have Faith. And in doing so the priest takes upon himself the responsibility of the believer's repudiation of further effort.

No words can express the damnable nature of such a transaction. It strikes at the base of all morality, high or low.

To remove a sense of individual responsibility from man is the beginning of all evil. And the whole dominance of the priestly caste exists by such a process.

The incurable inertia of all common minds permits the priest to do so. Here the struggle for existence uses up effort. It is sufficient for the common mind to find food, clothing, and a little entertainment. That done, it wishes to

relax, to forget the struggle, to forget responsibility.

It is this moment that is the priest's opportunity. Even his picture of heaven is designed to meet this desire of the common mind for relaxation, a place of eternal laziness, singing, fornification, and lying about at ease.

It is true that the Christian omits fornication from his presentment of heavenly bliss, leaving the Orientals to denounce his lack of candour in this item.

Well, here on earth this baseness is permitted. There is no high law to demand a higher dream of Futurity. But in some dim, gray place, some changing house for souls, one may catch already that quavering cry:

"I gave my conscience to this priest to keep." And the remorseless logic of Futurity will answer:

"Your conscience was not yours to give, nor his to take."

All higher minds know this already. The measure of that knowledge is the Creative impulse.

But the problem of common man is not effort, it is the desire to escape effort.

At its extreme, where does one find this effort of renunciation?

In priests, celibates, suicides, belly-gods, women who repudiate childbirth.

One does not place a stigma even here. The struggle for existence is hard, difficult and dangerous. To hide from it in a black coat; to wallow in sensuality in order to forget it; these are the expedients of helplessness, cowardice. Under the stress of existence, fear, and pain,

all men are driven at times to contemplate self-destruction, or in other words, to complete renunciation of effort.

But since the higher effort of man leads beyond earth, the renunciation of effort must lead there also.

And if one understands the conviction that Life is Effort, a remorseless logic of Futurity insists that one *must* face its problem.

If not Here, then There!

A Footnote to Creeds.—Those humbler, meeker souls, who find life terrible and difficult, who feel within themselves no courage for the struggle for existence, who fear the problem of sex—those find their solution in casting themselves on the more active and courageous man for support. But in order to excuse their mendicancy, to buy it, they pretend to manufacture something which does not exist, which they call “spiritual good.” For this shadow currency, imposed on simplicity and ignorance, they purchase at least security from the struggle of existence.

But by increasing their numbers, by acquiring doles in large quantities, by finding their security assured, they begin to look about a little, to become sleek, comfortable, and finally, proud. In fact, they exhibit the stigmata of any other leisured class, which has secured the respect of the multitude; an easy existence, and plenty of money.

They discard the whine of the mendicant, the rags of poverty. Where they once begged, now they demand. The active ones among them

dress up in uniforms, red robes, lace, gold tinsel. They adorn their shadow currency of "Spiritual good" also in fancy dress, ritual, mysticism, chanting, and incense. Finally they borrow help of the highest impulse, of Art, in order to make this masquerade of dignity impressive to the common mind.

What! The Catholic church has encouraged Art! Yes, the dunghill encouraged the rose to grow in order that all might admire the dung-hill.

With the growth of wealth, security, and pride, the next move is inevitable.

This corporation of mendicants will stretch out a hand for power—political power.

And once this direction has been taken in any permanent grouping of human beings it will become the permanent stimulus of that grouping.

For all its energies will be directed to this end, and those most active in pursuit of it will gain dominance and power among the less active and competent.

It is true a parade will still be made of manufacturing the shadow currency of "spiritual good," but being now quite shameless, these mendicant princes will take over also the powers of Evil. They will sell absolution against the attack of Evil. They will dispense "pardons," "indulgences," "benedictions," even "curses" and "anathemas."

But always, lest these proceedings should become a little too transparent to common minds,

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the high mendicants will make a parade of their poor mendicants, their humbler mendicants, but particularly of their demented mendicants.

Those who are cadaverous, pale, emaciated, who groan, howl, beat themselves, foam at the mouth; these will be special favourites—Saints.

The moral problem of this corporation of mendicants exists in their attacks on Effort, in their desire to make man relax, become submissive, resign the responsibility of conscience to themselves.

Here no doubt they have done great harm to humanity, great evil to Life.

But to-day man is become less submissive; he is tired of this absurd ritual, which has no significance to the affairs of daily life. If he still accepts, it is perfunctorily; indifferently.

The problem is less moral than political. From the higher aspect of morality it no longer counts.

It is to the statesman, the man of affairs, that one must leave the problem of dealing with this large, capable and active political organisation, that exists at the expense of society, gives nothing in return to society and still seeks to meddle, interrupt and corrupt the process of affairs.

Where the reactionary mind may be of use.—It may have a negative value in awakening at certain times to protest at any effort to change or alter conditions of the struggle for existence.

And since it is necessary to human development that the struggle for existence should endure, those who strive to perpetuate old cus-

toms, old habits of mind, old morals, old distinctions of class, race, nationality, may be the unconscious means of perpetuating its dangers and difficulties.

Still, they can hardly expect mankind's gratitude for their exertions in this direction.

The reactionary outcry also serves to announce the decay of obsolete morality, and therefore may be made useful to those who strive for better conditions.

When one finds, for instance, the Catholic Church abandoning the secrecy of priest craft to announce openly a political aim, as in its notorious sympathy for the German attack on civilization, its activity in the Irish revolt, and its efforts everywhere to hinder the higher effort to preserve universal order, one is aware at once that this reactionary attack comes from fear, from the knowledge that the conditions by which it is maintained are going.

It becomes automatically a part of the German attack on civilization, for this was a final effort to preserve an obsolete morality, a decayed principle of Government.

And the history of mankind teaches us that the moment a system of morality is outlived it becomes immoral; becomes evil.

Even the common mass of mankind to-day has no doubt of the intention that forced this enormous disaster on it. Presently mankind will begin to take stock of all those impulses which maintained and assisted this attack upon itself.

DECADENCE

MODERNITY has made too great a fuss over discovering the use for this word, which it has found synonymous with Decay.

But Decay is always a temporary episode; in fact, so temporary that it is the universal earthly principle under which energy is renewed.

To find certain human stock failing at intervals in energy, resource, effort, is no more than to find that trees also suffer a like failing.

But other trees renew growth, other lives renew Life.

It is due to shortsightedness of historians that we are apt to suppose dates, periods, can be a means of measuring the impulse of Life.

They confuse with it only the lower and vacillating process of existence.

But Time is a mystic emblem, not to be marked off by certain hieroglyphics on the almanac. The greatest period of Time any human mind can know is the span of its own existence, a mere instant in Eternity. To suppose that the vital force we call Life can be vitiated in a million of such instants is to fail in a sense of perspective.

It may be useful to the political structure of society to understand its own history, but it matters nothing to Life that one nation rises to political importance, or that another falls back a little in the commercial struggle.

Life still goes on perpetuating its effort, no matter in what direction the stream of its en-

ergy may be deflected in the struggle for existence.

To suppose that nationality can have anything to do with the higher effort is to suppose that one can arrest the course of human blood, and keep it stationary in one place.

Every higher effort striving to-day has behind it centuries of high effort. That can hardly be doubted.

It is only by supposing that three or four generations may exhaust a nervous disease by exterminating those who suffer it that we suppose a proclivity can last no more than three or four generations.

We cannot search back a few thousand years for the intellectual effort that produced a high effort to-day, nor even for the base impulse that gave the knife to yesterday's murderer.

If you cannot give a great effort to Life, at least send no more base impulses down the centuries.

The problem of the Present must be the problem of Futurity, for once the Present was Futurity to the Past. If the past effort had not been made, the present effort would be doubly harder. Perhaps impossible.

If we expect gratitude for our gifts to Life, let us not forget gratitude to those who bestowed the power to bestow gifts.

To look to race or nationality for the expression of a high effort; to account as racial any expression of effort is to account for something we have no knowledge of.

The high effort that came to life again in France may have had its beginning in Ancient

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Greece. The high effort that may appear in Australia may have had its origin in Atlantis.

It is no idle fancy to suppose that the genius of Shakespeare is alive somewhere to-day, coursing through obscure channels of intellect, waiting for the right combination of brain matter to meet and set alight its gigantic Creative effort.

Those who make war have more than war to answer for.

In contemplating the destructiveness of war, its most terrible aspect is not that of a world mourning for its dead, but of Life mourning for some slain creative effort.

Apart from such destructive accidents, the most persistent and deadly attack on Life comes from syphilitic taint, for this leaves the shell of existence, but destroys the intellectual effort completely. Therefore here alone may be a real effect of decadence. For this is not decay, but annihilation.

If decadence be a term applicable to Life, and therefore intellectual effort, one must find it rather in such human centres that appear to express the highest social and political activity. When Germany was nationally of small importance, when its commercial efforts were poor and isolated, its intellectual activity was at its height. We owe Mozart, Beethoven to these years. With commercial prosperity, social and political activity it fell spiritually to the lowest depths yet recorded in the history of mankind.

One cannot take Japanese Art too seriously, but such as it was, in its charm of decoration, it failed completely in the commercial decadence that has overtaken this people.

A final example of this failure of the Higher Effort is America. This nation, the most active in affairs the world has yet seen, the most industrious in the production of utilities and amusements, devoting a universal effort to acquiring wealth, which has become almost its sole moral valuation, produces absolutely nothing.

The beginning of a higher effort of culture, apparent in such minds as Emerson, Poe, Hawthorne, was as suddenly nipped in the bud as if a virus had overtaken this nation's intellectual effort.

When one contemplates the size of this nation, its noise, its ceaseless activities, its pretensions to civilization, and searches for some genuine evidence of intellectual effort to justify all this uproar, one returns from the search dumbfounded.

For it produces nothing. Absolutely nothing.

AESTHETIC VALUATIONS

TO be seriously preoccupied over the little problems of morality, the ownership of property, marriage and business, sociological, political, and humanitarian affairs; to find one's conscience, temperament and interest involved in the personal conduct of such problems is to find an explanation for all the smaller arts.

Nearly all novel writing, play writing, painting, sculpture and music is devoted to expressing a sense of importance in these things, and by doing so to add a charm, an entertainment to the duller problem of earning a living.

And since the problem of daily existence is always present to mankind, the constant theme of its thought and effort, it will naturally find most importance in any articulate expression that helps to present this problem more vividly and concisely to its mind.

And it will be most grateful when entertainment is added to elucidating this problem.

Thus the most ephemeral aspect of art will always appear the most significant and important to the generation that produces it.

One need not present examples. Take any book-shelf where the better efforts of a generation are collected and the moral valuation is apparent at a glance. It is always personal conduct and the social system that inspires these efforts, and only where the deeper problem of emotion touches the lesser social problem is its existence even admitted.

One dare not enumerate examples of the higher, the creative impulse, so few, so isolated

that in contemplating them one almost arrives with the critic of Life at despair, the despair that gives life over to the little effort, the ephemeral problem of daily existence.

One can only return to optimism by recalling our utter ignorance of any significance of the symbol we call Time. Three or four creative impulses in a thousand years—that may be even a large number for so infinitesimal a period in eternity.

At least those three or four are sufficient to set going the thousand upon thousand smaller efforts to create, so that the power and suggestion of a great work becomes universal.

And this begins the spiritual development of common mankind, this is the universal morality of Great Art.

Even in discussing the secondary problem of Aesthetic Art, one cannot turn aside to argue with those minds who find civilization in such mechanical toys as aeroplanes and motor cars. These things are due to no higher capacity than that which adds up figures, assisted by nature's gift of a thumb to use tools.

Machinery is useful, for it multiplies utility, but its spiritual influence goes no deeper than a child's sense of amazement and pleasure.

And all those multiple activities of human curiosity we call science—they bring us only to a sense for observing natural phenomena, something which was already there, not something which required man's effort to create.

And erudition, scholarship—what is all this but annotating and memorising the higher efforts of others; a useful industry, for it helps to preserve the higher effort.

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Mechanics, Science, these serve at their highest to alleviate the primitive struggle for existence. The discovery of radium, wireless telegraphy, the Rontgen ray, these things send a thrill of gratified amazement through the community, but they do not advance mankind an iota spiritually.

This will never be believed by mankind in general, nor is it necessary that it should be. The instantaneous repudiation that springs up in all average minds at such a statement is self-preservative, the stimulus to keep its own private effort alive.

So that when one makes the assertion that Creative art is the highest morality on earth, the highest development the human mind is capable of, one makes it on the understanding that mankind in general *must* repudiate it.

Does so positive a statement still offend you?

Unfortunately, belief lies in affirmation.

And being an affirmation, be thankful for the opportunity given you to affirm your denial.

It must be remembered that the Aesthetic valuation of Art is established and accepted because it is the Aesthete who also practises art. Only in this case he calls himself the Artist. The Aesthete who does not practise calls himself the Connoisseur. Both seek the same end—virtuosity, technical perfection, style. The spirit of a work of art is almost indifferent to them.

For that reason Aesthetic taste almost invariably skips the two great periods in Creative

effort: the Greek, the Renaissance. They find charm in the tentative efforts that preceded these periods, in the Primitives, the Botticellis, etc.; in the tired pretty minds that are the evidence of Creative exhaustion, the Watteaus, Whistlers, and the like.

Since it lacks a definite direction, that is, something definite to say, it exists by inventing formulas and precepts which do away with the necessity of new thoughts, new effort. It becomes Egyptian.

But formulas, however satisfactory to practice, suffer the inevitable reaction that comes from too much repetition. The mind becomes tired of them. Therefore they suffer exactly the fluctuating impulse of Fashion. For both Fashion and Aestheticism serve the same purpose—to adorn and render gay the struggle for existence.

When one generation changes from the light, graceful impulse of the Watteau, Boucher formulas, to the solemn, hard, pedantic expression of the David, Ingres formula and the next solely to the problem of arrangement in tone, as expressed by Whistler, the effect is always of sterility, never of fecundity.

What little there is to say becomes so precious that it is eked out in driblets, and it is this very paucity of effort that enchantsthe connoisseur, for, most of all, *he* desires rarity. He desires rarity even of Creative effort.

It is easily understood why all Aestheticism with one voice rejects Rubens. This Giant, in his sense of inexhaustible vitality, has the effect of a torrent that drowns all feeble efforts.

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Those who scramble out stand on the banks, uttering cries of exasperation at the size, force and volume of this creative stream. What is needed to soothe these minds is a little rivulet, flowing decorously through an ordered garden, among urns and statues and charming little artificial shrubs.

Since technical perfection is the Aesthetic definition of Art, all things that have technical perfection will be Art. And technical perfection may be had equally in the surface of paint or the surface of a polished chair. So the word Art has been lavished on any particular species of craftsmanship, even on such utilities as pots and furniture.

To-day Art is a shop term, but particularly a secondhand shop term, for above all, the Aesthete likes a little dust to accumulate on a work, just as a gourmet prefers cobwebs on a bottle of Port.

To meet this demand there is even a craft for the manufacture of dust and cobwebs.

It is all very delightful, no doubt, and an inner knowledge of this trade in rarities confers an equal sense of rarity on those who practise it, but it has no more to do with the morality of Creative Art than the ritual of any other trade or religion.

Its value, be it said again, is in adding a grace and adornment to daily existence. It helps to refine and educate, and its very greatest service is that, as its mission is to collect and preserve any evidence of artistry, it collects and preserves automatically the Creative effort also.

It is mischievous only where it confuses the higher impulse by demanding precedence of it.

In this direction its effect is exactly that of its most loudly expressed abhorrence, the scientific intrusion into Art.

To this intrusion we owe the Realistic, Naturalist expression of actuality.

And since the scientific impulse is wholly modern, its interference with modern Art has been simply devastating.

Its gospel is concerned to register facts. Indeed, without a fact before its eyes it is powerless even to see. Nor is the selection of facts essential. Any fact will do, so that it be recorded exactly. There are those who even go to the extreme of demanding that only ugly facts be recorded in order that the virtue of the record should be wholly the manner of recording it.

Childish Logic can hardly go further.

At its lowest here we get Zola, a demented photographer who photographed all the wrong things.

But only distinctions of manner distinguish one such photographer from another. Alma Tadema or the Impressionists,—each seeks a scientific formula for recording Facts. In the end we have a frenzied effort to invent a hieroglyphic for recording actuality, practised by those poor miserable devils, the Post-Impressionists.

To follow the course of these obscure side tracks in defective mentality is an entertaining diversion in Psychology (which is also an off-shoot of Connoisseurship, since its object is to collect human rarities), but again we must repeat there is neither development nor stimulus to any high human effort in them. Indeed, the direction of all such formulas is to do away with

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effort; to find an easy road over that mountainous path—technical achievement.

And it is upon this adventure in exploration that all uncertain effort gets lost, and the confusion of any direction in art is due to the cries of these wanderers, amid the confusion of tracks leading nowhere.

No wonder the scientific pundit was welcomed in the arts, bearing aloft that incandescent burner of his, which lends so bright an illumination to all Facts.

No wonder he was hailed as the Messiah of Art risen at last, and that the passion of his devotees still burns to-day. Wherever one looks down the dim miles of picture galleries, one sees the dire effect of his message recorded in the thousand upon thousand examples of something seen and petrified on canvas or in marble.

In a phrase one may dismiss the higher pretensions of nearly all these efforts.

They take something from Life.

And in a phrase one may express the effort that goes beyond them—

It gives something to Life.

A Footnote to Aesthetic Valuations.—Automatically there rises an angry cry of dissent.

“What, even to record a fact truly, to take an actuality and observe its form, tone, colour and lighting, and to place these dexterously on canvas so that the effect is pleasing to look at, does not this demand a great concentration of effort, and is not to succeed here a big achievement?”

One cannot hasten swiftly enough to acknowledge the justness of this claim to respect. To succeed in such an effort is a high achievement and one that places the successful mind high in human values.

It is this constant preoccupation with the external charm of existence that keeps a sense of it alive in humanity.

It is the highest effort to beautify the struggle for existence; to raise other minds above the debasing little interests in commercial affairs and to add a great stimulus to human development in teaching the eye to seek beauty.

And the novelist, the play-writer, who claims respect for his achievement, he, too, must be accorded respect.

This piece of daily existence that he has selected to represent in miniature; this slice of actuality, with its play of event and emotion on character, and the careful analysis of character so affected; this cautious and laborious effort of visualization and construction;—is not this difficult and arduous effort worthy of respect?

It is. The problem of daily life is clearer for this effort. In its effect of criticism it may help the social structure more sensibly to order its affairs. Its mission is to stimulate a personal consciousness in the reader, even if that consciousness goes no higher than his own personal struggle with existence.

It remains, like that of the objective artist, a fine achievement.

But neither ~~are~~^{is} Creative efforts.

The sense of eye-sight was only needed here, aided by a critical faculty to analyse the thing

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seen. In effect, it is but putting on canvas or paper what every common mind sees of its daily existence, only that one mind is articulate, the other speechless.

To understand where an effort is most valuable one must understand where it is least valuable.

Then what is the lowest articulate expression of Actuality?

The Actor, the Journalist.

One mimics, the other makes a bare record.

And what is the most carefully analysed effort of realism in a novel or a picture but an effort to observe, imitate and record a piece of actuality on paper or canvas.

The measurable distance between the low and the high effort here is in technical achievement alone; the style in which the fact is recorded.

The inner vision contributed nothing. But the eternal confusion that must always go on where there is an attempt to differentiate the Creative Effort from the Objective Effort lies in the fact that both use the same medium, the same machinery.

The Inner Vision, the Outer Vision, both arrive at their expression by the same technical vehicle.

The confusion is inevitable. There is only one outlet on earth for any expression of effort, high or low, and that is through the senses. Shakespeare and the savage have both the same mechanical equipment.

But the phenomenon of Creative Vision as distinct from Objective Vision is that it does

not need to learn a thing in order to know it. It knows already.

We use for such powers the symbols of Intuition, Inspiration, Imagination. But these, like all symbols, do not explain, they only distinguish.

There can only be one explanation for this precocity of power and knowledge and that is, that every Creative mind is the inherited receptacle of previous high effort.

And this alone should become the powerful stimulus for all minds to make an effort, if it is only an effort to understand themselves.

But, alas, one sees in the almost universal passion for justification an almost universal aversion to inquiring too closely into the motives and actions of the human heart.

Is it necessary to add an instance to the distinction between the Creative impulse and the Objective impulse?

Then if Shakespeare is still taken as one of the few high examples of Creative Vision, it is apparent how little of his actual vision of daily life is used in his work. The people and conditions of a little town like Stratford—where are they? The people and conditions of a larger town like London, where are they also?

These contributed undoubtedly the material from which he drew his vision of character and emotion, but whatever problem of human passion is attacked, be it Indecision, Remorse, Jealousy, Ingratitude, Sexual Despair, Ambition—the whole gamut of human expression is here—he needed only to reach out an arm to

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sweep up any combination of character and emotion, to stamp each in the mind as an indelible symbol of its universal appeal, and project this visible effort of creation in a form that all may understand.

This colossal achievement is beyond the mere learning and observation of a few years of life. We may think it possible to-day, but our simple egotism is due to the understanding given by such creative minds as Shakespeare's.

It is by understanding the stimulus of the lesser objective mind that one sees the distinction between learning a thing by sight and knowing a thing by intuition.

If Mr. Wells had not begun his experience in a draper's shop, or passed through a course of Science classes, he would have had nothing to write about. In other words, he has only had these things to write about. Whatever section of existence he chanced to evolve under he would have more or less faithfully recorded a picture of it.

And there are so many degrees of capacity in the manner of recording these pictures of existence that aesthetic valiators are for ever at work, striving to get their shop labels properly adjusted. But since there can be no definite value placed on the mere universal power of eyesight, of necessity the critic of its expression is driven to consider only its expression.

To its final and breathless pronouncement that "Style is genius," one can only retort by denying Genius to those who have only style.

If a final example is needed in the difference between the common vision and the rare vision, one need only turn again to the Venus de Milo.

Praxiteles does not give us the portrait of a woman, but his own inward analysis of feminine beauty.

It is an essence that is distilled, not a fact recorded; and it is this mysterious quality that has startled the vision of all mankind, sending it forth on its own individual quest for an understanding of beauty.

There is no measuring the immensity of this single gift. At a stroke it wipes out all silly assumptions that progress can be a material problem. It is an eternal problem for each individual mind, and one can but measure how difficult it is for the common mind to advance without such symbols of Creative effort before it, when one considers the dark ages that followed Christianity's effort to destroy the beauty of antiquity.

It was when the few surviving examples of its greater works were brought to light that the intellectual impulse was again revived in man.

But how much has never come to light; how much has human development been delayed by the terrible disaster that fell upon it, headed by an obscure Jew two thousand years ago.

We on earth cannot realise it, but if "Realisation" is the word above that dark place in the universe where the enemies of Life go to, we can guess whose groans are loudest there to-day.

If we can come to accept the prescience of the Creative mind; its assurance of technical achievement, its arrival without the aid of scholarship, its fecundity of expression, and its unhesitating direction in expression, one must accept the belief that other efforts, other suc-

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cesses, even other failures have contributed to bring to perfection this final effort.

And this conviction adds a new stimulus to the problem of effort.

It can be transmitted.

Its visible failure is not its spiritual failure.

To strive and fail may be at least to hand on the power to strive and succeed.

It is not sufficient to leave only the message of its work. It must leave also the message of its blood.

Its gratitude to past lives must be expressed by handing on a life to the future.

EPILOGUE

IN a room lined with books two men are talking. One is any age past forty; the fortunate forty that heaves a sigh of relief upon leaving sensation behind it, and seeing maturity of thought ahead.

The other is twenty-five, perhaps thirty—the age when emotion must precede thought, and action either.

Their voices are a little raised, showing that intimacy permits contentiousness on abstract matters.

The Elder.—I say that at the basis of life there are two forces, our symbols for which are Good and Evil. It is in the contention of these forces that Effort is created, and that man stands between, the receptacle of these forces—the vehicle of Effort. As he accepts or rejects Effort, he makes his choice of Good or Evil.

The Younger.—Yes, and I say that our symbols of Good and Evil lead only to word-spinning and the manufacture of cobwebs. I think it time mankind left them alone and devoted itself to the problem of life.

The Elder.—Good and Evil are the problem of Life; the only problem. There is no escape from it, and he who seeks to run away from it, or to forget it in narcotics, is he upon whom its solution falls heaviest.

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The Younger.—It's no use. Life is a problem of perception. It is based on sensation; on the capacity to perceive actuality. There is no extra sense for perceiving Good and Evil, therefore they remain outside Life.

The Elder.—For that reason they are the highest problem of Life. Perception by the senses is no longer a problem. We have analysed it to a finality. We know that it serves no other purpose than Existence, or in other words, eating and fornication; keeping alive in order to produce Life.

And I say that that which takes us beyond this primitive business is the development of an extra sense for perceiving Good and Evil.

The Younger.—Yes, and that fine extra sense, which you call Conscience, has led man into more dark alleys than ever the broad path of Inclination has taken him.

The Elder.—You are confusing symbols, as usual.

Inclination is also a problem of Conscience and again you are confusing Conscience and Inclination with the Social System.

Those who wish to shelve the problem of Conscience accept a code of social morality, which absolves them from thinking any more about it.

They call this trick “obeying the dictates of conscience.”

Only those who go alone are permitted to discuss the problem of Conscience, for only those face its problem.

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The Younger.—You are still word-spinning. Going alone is going with the mob; both ways lead through the same difficulties and dangers. You may shelve the problem of Conscience, but you can't shelve the difficulties of Life.

The Elder.—It is by shelving the problem of conscience that one does shelve the difficulties of Life, the only difficulty.

The Younger.—Well, it seems to me you are exaggerating something that is not so very difficult or dangerous after all. A little common-sense puts your problem of conscience in the waste-paper basket.

For what is this problem of yours of Good and Evil, but the business of getting through twenty-four hours a day. A little of your enthusiasm might make it more entertaining, certainly. Personally, I cannot apply your Symbol, for I can't recall ever meeting a really good man, and I am quite sure I never met a wholly bad one. Vice is so easily negatived by a little virtue. I cannot find man either admirable or despicable. He is at most merely dull or amusing. I neither judge nor applaud him. I accept him.

The Elder.—In other words, you confer on Life the divinity of your tolerance.

The Younger.—Certainly, when I think Life needs it. I believe my tolerance does less harm than your fanaticism. All you do is to interfere, to upset.

The Elder.—So the slug argues, when they disturb him to build a statue over his hole.

Indeed, simplicity and egotism can hardly go further than your tolerance. You wash your hands of a personal responsibility, do you? You are permitted to stand aside as a spectator of Life. The pageant of human passion is for your entertainment, it seems! Man is well crucified if his squirming helps to lighten your boredom.

The Younger.—Oh, to blazes with all this affected responsibility for man's lot. What do you expect a sensible man to do in this silly muddle of a social scheme that has replaced the primitive conditions of existence?

Replace theology by windy sociological gabble, like the English? Analyse the artistic sense to extinction, like the French? Set up a creed of National Megalomania and kill half mankind to prove it wrong, like the Germans? Go besotted over political hatred like the Russians and destroy everything to satisfy it, including themselves? Have but one universal ideal of money-grubbing like the Americans? Wherever one looks, does one find any higher ideal than one of these things? There is a lot of monkey chatter about humanitarianism and culture, freedom and artistic refinement, but no one believes in it, no one follows it.

So I'm damned if I shall contribute an air of seriousness to this muddle. It serves its end, as far as I am concerned, as a spectacle. I find it interesting to watch, and in the meanwhile, I intend to get just as much as I can out of Life by entertaining

myself, by enjoying the works of artists and writers, but most by enjoying women and food.

And when I can no longer enjoy these things, I will be content to die, and so end the silly and aimless business by extinction in the grave.

The Elder.—Do not be so confident, my young friend. I suspect you will discover that the grave is not the end, but the beginning of this problem of Life. You may discover that this present condition is a preliminary affair, a mere curtain-raiser to the real drama of Effort.

Doubtless, the grave as a finality would be a very happy solution to a great number of people, but it is much too easy, too simple a way to escape from responsibility.

You must yet learn that the essential condition of the earthly existence as a test of human value is that it gives complete freedom of action. Even within the trivial restrictions of social morality, the motto over the gates of birth is "Do as you please."

You have only to collect in sufficiently large numbers to defy any existing law of order. It is true, others may collect in larger numbers and punish you, but this is not in reality an effort to punish, but an effort of self-preservation. If you destroy order, you destroy the universal stability of Existence.

For this reason, the future of the lower and disorderly elements of society will be

organised slavery. That is inevitable, for the worker is demanding it himself, by striving to become a menace, not merely to the more intelligent and ingenious class of society, but to the process of existence, of which he is also an element. It is not a question of justice or injustice, but of necessity, and the worker in the end will find his solution in a benevolent system of slavery, which will make his conditions easier and insure him safety in the struggle for existence. Therefore all good politicians and humanitarians should welcome the mob impulse of misrule that has overtaken the stress of industrial conditions, for it means that the worker and the employer will both come under stricter supervision, and the reaction will be towards social order.

But all this belongs to the mere trivial problem of Existence. Your instances of national disorder, poverty of ideality, muddle and gabble, are only expressions of the universal refusal to accept discipline that is the natural effect of a hatred of high effort.

All this uproar and insistence is to demand instantly that the struggle for existence should cease, and that man should become at a stroke comfortable, well fed, lazy, and entertained. He finds the test of effort unendurable, and therefore turns his resentment to anything that seems to hinder him from the gratification of relaxing and enjoying himself. The ingenious

ever find their solution in acquiring money, by which they may purchase easier conditions. But this quest becomes its own diversion; its own means of escaping the higher problem of Life, so that they forget that its object was relaxation, and devote themselves to it as a finality. And since in acquiring wealth, they automatically acquire importance, a sense of power replaces both the desire for entertainment and relaxation, and power becomes, therefore, a final means of throwing off discipline, of doing what one pleases. There is not an ounce of difference in the impulse that sends a fat beast of a millionaire seeking money, and the poor devil of a workman seeking the millionaire's blood.

Both wish to escape effort, and acquire ease, and the political distinction is only that one succeeds and the other fails. In either case, they present the exquisite paradox of making the most frenzied efforts to escape effort.

Neither is a whit more morally valuable than the other, except, perhaps, that the millionaire is the meaner animal, because, having eased himself of the struggle to exist, he exerts his greatest energies to debar his brother with the pick and shovel from reaching a like condition of comfort.

And the under-dog's pretensions to a life of unlimited beer and motor-cars is a trifle depreciated by the fact that he *is* an under-dog. It is not to be supposed that he chose the position of under-dog for him-

self, and it is perfectly clear that he can by a little persistence escape from it, for there is his brother the millionaire to prove it.

The hatred of these two creatures for each other is the natural expression of an affinity of mind. They both follow the same ideal.

To those solemn economists who point out that but for the labours of both millionaire and workman, the enormously important commercial system could not exist, one can only reply that the happiest event for humanity would be to have the whole absurd structure collapse, and so force the community to a simpler and easier means of filling its belly.

But from any higher aspect than mere polities this problem in human stress and human hatred is not a problem at all. It serves only to express at its lowest mankind's desire to escape discipline, and the struggle for existence. By making this problem more elaborate he has only succeeded in making it more difficult, and has given an opportunity for cunning and rapacity to profit at the expense of ignorance and stupidity. But underneath it is the same eternal effort to escape effort, which sends feebler organisms to religion or sensuality as a narcotic. One dismisses it, because it is not important.

The Younger.—(Exasperated.) What! You dismiss this problem that agitates nearly

all humanity. This arrogance is intolerable.

The Elder.—I do not dismiss it. Life dismisses it. It serves no high end. Its direction is the belly, not the soul. If the grave were the end of Life, this problem in rapacity and money-grubbing would be justified, and the man who acquired most of the fatnesses, the sensualities, and luxuries, and by them, power over his fellows, would be the wisest and highest pig in the human pigsty.

But the impeccable logic of the high Creative Effort denies that the grave is a finality. Therefore, this struggle for existence becomes a temporary affair, which must be borne by all with equanimity.

The Younger.—But you disavow what is the earthly importance of this struggle. Out of it, a better condition of things will be evolved on earth.

The Elder.—Do not believe it. Or, if you wish, believe it, since such a belief may be a stimulus to those who labour in the pig-sty.

But it cannot alter. Since this life is temporary, its conditions remain temporary; eternally temporary. Its conditions have always been the same, therefore it becomes apparent that the conditions are essential. They are imposed for a reason.

The Younger.—You say imposed. By whom imposed?

The Elder.—They are imposed by both Necessity and Morality. The prime reason of this necessity is the shortness of man's life

on earth. Sixty or seventy years is too short a time to transmit a condition of progress, even if all strove for the same condition, which is manifestly impossible. All that can be transmitted is a tradition of progress, and this becomes obsolete even before it can be transmitted. The social problem changes with each generation, or by the pressure of new circumstances. That is apparent. It is only because each generation makes a lot of noise that it thinks it is progressing. But each generation makes exactly the same amount of noise. There is one universal illusion, and that is that every man mistakes for progress the fact that he happens to be alive. The world must be progressing, for there he is to prove it.

No, no, dispel this illusion. There is no single instance in which it can be proved. Man learns one thing only to forget another. He learns how to build steamships only to forget how to build the Pyramids. Even in such a matter as hygiene, of which there is so much prattle to-day, he learns how to destroy smallpox only to find himself devastated by a new disease which kills off six millions at a stroke.

No, no, disease is a natural condition of earthly life,—it germinates by the same process as health. We cannot even store knowledge, as it is so confidently asserted, for knowledge becomes obsolete with new conditions that demand new knowledge.

The Younger.—I deny that. If one generation produces a poor machine, the next generation perfects it. In a hundred years we have got from steam engines to aeroplanes.

The Elder.—Dear me, I thought we were talking about human development. Aeroplanes don't make better men; they only carry men about more swiftly. If this discussion is to descend to mere frivolity, it had better cease.

The Younger.—Oh well, go on, if you must talk.

The Elder.—I am aware that this is merely talk. For that reason you are absolved from taking it seriously. Indeed, it is even essential that you should not believe a word of it.

Very well, then. I was saying that the physical conditions under which man exists on earth cannot change.

They are so temporary, so fragile, so short, so casual, so utterly lacking in direction, so eternally the same, that it becomes apparent that this very condition of fragility, uncertainty, and stress is an essential condition. Then what essential end can it serve? The answer is again apparent. It serves as a test.—a probation, a breeding ground for those who survive the test. And who are those? Why, those who accept the test of life, and not only accept, but who rise above it; who add to the process of survival a high individual effort. And the highest effort man is capable of is to create Great Art. For he not only brings to it the greatest dexterity of craftsmanship.

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but the highest power of intellectual vision.

And to do this requires the most intense concentration, the severest discipline. The apparent ease of a creative work is the evidence of the Creator's intensity of effort.

Progress is possible on earth, but only the progress of the individual. And that individual effort is the one thing that can be transmitted, the one thing that can be handed on as the stimulus to fresh effort.

Therefore the stress of Physical conditions becomes a part of the moral test, and in order that all should start equal in the struggle for development, complete freedom of action is given to man. *He may do as he pleases.* He may accept effort, or he may refuse effort. He may do any idiotic thing he likes with the social system. He may impose his will on material things; he may take a plebiscite even on morality and decide that *this* is Good, *that* Evil. Finally, he may kill others; he may kill himself.

Irresponsibility can go no further. And his childish excuse for these antics is to invent God and put the responsibility for himself on It.

But it won't do. Doubtless this notion of a personal God is a very comfortable and easy way out of the tangle, but the Great Automatic process of Development puts it in the pathologist's department, along with opium and other narcotics.

Development is the impetus of higher development. Retrogression the impetus of lower retrogression.

Beyond the brief episode of this earthly test, there is *no one* to listen to excuses. *No one* to adjudicate calmly. Each soul goes starkly forth to meet the just placement of its value. Weighted with dullness, ugliness, brutality, it ~~sank~~ even on earth. What dark place in the universe it sinks to elsewhere, one dare not pause to think.

But that soul which has already become cleaner, gayer, stronger in the earth, that soul has already risen here. Even we, who dedicate our admiration to man's highest effort on earth, cannot divine from what dazzling height of achievement he may yet look back and down at his little effort here. But we must keep our eyes on all that reaches upward, in order to steady the nerves, brace the energies, clear the judgment and so prepare for this ascent also.

For this height does not rise from a level plain. It rises above an abyss.

The Younger.—(Starting up.) I won't believe it.

Aren't the temporal ills of this life enough that you wish to shoulder it with gigantic burden of Good and Evil? Isn't the physical problem of life bad enough without adding to it the spiritual? Aren't Fear, Pain, Disease, Cold, Hunger and Death a sufficient penalty for the boon of Life?

Isn't it enough for you that the physical conditions here are at best only tolerable, and at worst insufferable? Man must even

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make an existence, in order to exist. He must tear his food and clothing from the inferior animals, grub in the earth for roots and herbs, build dens to live in, make tools to work with, and labour unceasingly.

No climate is tender to his miserable epidermis. He crawls under a weight of atmosphere that clogs effort, that vitiates energy and forces depression on his weariness. Everywhere, leagued against him are difficulty, danger, and the eternal process of decay.

And to this unceasing struggle with the blind process of nature he has added the vast tax of his own social structure, with its network of laws and conventions, its suppressions and evasions, and its perversion by secrecy of all natural impulse.

Upon the miserable creature whose back supports this burden you will pile also the curse of moral values. To the labour of saving his body you add the intolerable labour of saving his soul.

And to do this, you subject him to an ethic of good and evil, so uncertain that no man has ever yet defined it, and for his inability to answer this conundrum you would damn him eternally.

Upon my soul, you moralists are insatiable, and I think God may well merit the divine tolerance of man, if you are his mouthpieces.

The Elder.—Softly, my young friend, your outburst is a defence, not a justification. There is no talk of eternal damnation for fools,

who are not important enough to damn. Only a remorseless logic insists that no man can blame another, no man can save another, no man can damn another. Each must go alone on the path of man's destiny.

As for your strictures on the painful nature of earthly existence, why, even on your own valuation that you are no more than a walking belly attached to the sexual apparatus, there is still a good deal of entertainment to be got out of it.

For those who have courage, there is a great deal more than mere entertainment, for half the chimera of pain and misery dissolves with a little laughter.

Your picture of Gloom is only the squeal of a rat in a trap. But there are no traps for those who despise a little stolen cheese.

All meagre, starved souls, who groan at the difficulties of existence, who strive to evade its burden, who parade their boredom and depression as a serious virtue, these are the cowards who flee from battle.

The Gloomy, the Depressed, the Miserable, are the most presumptuous of all human animals, for they actually assume as a *right* that it is some one else's business to make them happy.

As for the Bored, even one's tolerance stops short at these arrogant weevils who demand that the bread should also entertain them.

Only removed from these by a fraction of blood pressure are the Exasperated ones, the Rapacious, the Blood-thirsty even, the

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money-grubbers and the earth-grubbers, the wolves and the moles.

Away with them, they serve only to emphasise the good thing that emerges from the struggle, and that is Gaiety.

The truly brave souls are the Gay souls. They not only accept the hardness of Life, they bring to acceptance the gift of cheerfulness. They do not demand to be soothed and comforted, but offer their laughter to those who have none. They wish neither to wallow in life like the fat hogs, nor flee from it like the starved pigs. It is sufficient for them to do their work, and to find entertainment in their own laughter.

These have already travelled far on the road to a higher development, and when they can add to cheerfulness a love of beauty, and can exult in the efforts of those creative minds who express the beauty and passion of Life, their love and admiration becomes also creative, for it stimulates the creative mind to higher efforts.

It is for these the higher effort also works. In striving for high achievement itself, it is able to bestow an impetus to those who helped its achievement by loving it.

The Younger.—(Pettishly.) Well, this is a nice pass you have brought humanity to, that it must wait upon the creative efforts of a few poets, artists and musicians.

What of the collective energy of mankind, even if it strives for no better end

than to make human conditions here on earth saner and better?

What of the efforts of statesmen, scientists, of engineers even? What of the architect who designs a great and dignified building? Who is it but these men of action who create and keep moving the civilisation that produces your poets and artists?

The Elder.—I expected this repudiation. It is just. On earth it must always remain the prime negation of the value of the creative effort. Mankind cannot eat pictures and statues. It cannot draw physical energy from music or poetry. Therefore these things are useless to it. They must remain excrescences on the struggle for existence, or at best, excuse themselves as an entertainment for the leisure of inferior minds.

Still, I must correct you in one trifle. Your man of action did not create civilisation. He would not have known that such a problem as civilisation existed if it had not been made for him by higher minds. The problem of civilisation is not the making of mechanical toys to save itself physical effort, but in striving for a higher form of consciousness in order to increase its power of effort.

Your man of action ran about hunting animals with a club till the first dawn of creative effort drew a picture of him in such an act, or made a song about his act, and so made him conscious of it and of himself. And through becoming conscious

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of himself, the germ of intellect took energy, and the problem of civilisation was begun.

But who wishes to talk logic to childish minds, who must of necessity thrust it from them, in order to believe that their own private little struggle to exist is the problem of the universe.

Only, if you wish to understand a little of the problem of human development, delete from your mind such items as Poet, Artist, Musician or Thinker.

These are only professional labels, not definitions. Any fool can practise as one of these with a little technical skill.

You must replace them by such terms as Vitalised Organisms, a greater inward vision, the power to think clearly, to understand the senses, to analyse their perception of beauty, passion, sensation; by an added clarity of sight to perceive delicacy of form, and so select what is beautiful in external things; the power to add to the common process of hearing an exquisite perception of cadences, tones, rhythms; the ability to put these things in the articulate forms of words, so that they become apparent to less sensitive organisms; in fact, to perceive and analyse and put in created form the vision of Life.

The power to do these things is the rarest and highest development of which the human mind is capable. Since it is the highest on earth, it becomes the direction of Life, the road to futurity, the futurity

of fresh effort, and beyond that again, still greater effort.

The Younger (picking up his hat).—I'm going home. I do not believe a word of all this, but I admit that it terrifies me. The spirit of democracy within me revolts at this selection of the few in preference to the many. If your version of Futurity splits up humanity into groups, sections, individuals, the power of us who rule values by right of votes, will be gone. What damnable injustice!

The Elder.—Not at all. The high individual mind already escapes your plebiscite of opinion by disregarding it. You merely force it for company upon its thoughts since it can get no company from you.

The Younger.—I say it is unjust. You speak as if High Effort were a goal possible for all. Will you kindly take myself as example? I am a plain man; a cog in the social machine. Whether I am a clerk, a journalist, a grocer, a lawyer or a bookseller does not matter. I have to work reasonably hard for a living. Perhaps I am married and have children, in which case, my economical burden is doubled. What dreams of higher effort I started out with in youth I have had to abandon, because I have no energy left over for them after earning a living. As I get older, I find my energy decreasing; I keep on working, because I must. What leisure I have I use to recuperate. I go to the theatre, read novels, play games. Sometimes I pursue a stray love affair. To be

candid, I could do with more of these, but they are difficult to manage, expensive, and tend to upset one when found out. My fancy is constantly straying after the women I see in the street, at the theatre, or in the houses of my friends. At best I am forced to content myself with mental liaisons, which are unsatisfying. However, let this pass. On the whole, I am a useful member of the community, conform to its laws, think intelligently on polities, and pay my taxes. If, in my private life, I do only a negative amount of Good, at least I do no positive harm

The Elder.—Yes, Yes. I understand the nature of these protestations. You want to know why this theory of Creative Effort does not supply you with a set of rules of conduct. In other words, you want it to tell you “what you must do to be saved.”

Well you must go elsewhere for such mechanical text books. The Creative Effort is not a beast of burden to carry fools upward. If you can read its message, you have already risen without rules. If you cannot, console yourself with the knowledge that wherever you go, you will at least be a thousand times better off than you were on earth. Here you have no direction. There, doubtless, you will find a direction waiting for you, so the problem of effort, which you may evade on earth, you may still face there.

The Younger.—All this is supposition. I must have proof before I can believe

The Elder.—In other words, the high minds of Futurity must come back to earth and beg for your patronage. But if it will console you, know that the proof of Futurity is in the paradox that there is no proof. In other words, Effort must give itself to Life, not sell itself for future promises. If you want that sort of thing, go to the priest and barter your conscience for a narcotic. Go to the sensation-mongers and soothe yourself with the belief that one of these days you may be an elemental spook, trying to get back to solid earth again. Join the good materialists and discover the immense significance of Ants. Join any mob you like that seeks an easy road to the problem of man's destiny between Good and Evil, but remember only this. The final road to that problem you must travel alone.

The Younger.—I repudiate your belief. I prefer not to know these things. (He goes out hastily.)

THERE is a third person present at this discussion. He has not been noticed before, because he is an unassertive, amiable personage, of no age in particular. He may be 30 or 80, being of that temperate and impartial nature which is the evidence of a mind free from the ageing stress of physical desire or intellectual passion.

He sits by the fire, smoking. Beside him is a glass of wine. Now that the Younger has de-

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parted, he turns to the Elder disputant, with a calm air.

The Ageless One.—I have listened with interest to all you have had to say, and it seems to me a just claim that if man's intellectual development reaches its highest point in Creative effort, then Creative effort on earth must indicate the direction of effort elsewhere, since the grave cannot explain the nature of man's tremendous achievement. At the same time, I admit that something within me is shocked at this affirmation so final and aristocratic. Perhaps the secret egotism of my heart raises a cry of rebellion; perhaps the virus of a universal democracy runs too strongly in my veins; but it seems to me that the elect are too few for the centuries of effort. What of the uncreative minds; have they no place in your cosmography of effort, or may they cut their throats and have done with it?

The Elder.—You have carried this affirmation too far. If the effort is made by man, it is also made *for* man. This effort gives thought its wings, and by the power of thought alone can man rise. If the high effort were not made, the low effort would fail. On earth, the material of all creative effort is Life, in order that its message may stimulate other lives. Assuredly, all those who receive its message, who understand its message, are also a part of its message. For wherever the impulse of development came from, its growth is of the earth: and

man the animal is only the rank soil that bears the flower of intellect.

The Ageless One.—Ah, that is the point. We have traced man back to the neolithic cave. Was it accident, then, that dropped this seed of intellect in this animal's brain?

The Elder.—Thank you, no. I will not embark on that topic. We have had enough of divine revelation on this earth already. All efforts to explain the birth of life end in mysticism or scientific text books. Both are equally absurd. Our ignorance can only be explained by accepting our ignorance as a first essential to knowledge. Why, without this enigma, what need would there be to question, and without questioning, how could we ever advance? When it is fully understood that the essential thing on this earth is not the finality of knowledge, but the eternal stimulus of ignorance, understanding will have arrived, and thought will be ready to leave the earth. But reassure yourself. At our present rate of barbarism, a million years or so may pass before this understanding becomes universal. We are so busy counting up the old age of the world that it never occurs to us to consider that the world is just beginning its growth. That is, the process we call civilisation is only in its infancy. And civilisation can be the only universal problem of common mankind, for we know that the high individual intellect of man arrives spasmodically without its aid. At present, it is sufficient for us to know that failure.

struggle, and uncertainty are the conditions of growth, for by accepting these conditions, we accept the problem of Life. And with that acceptance, the problem of intellect is begun.

The Ageless One.—That is at least just and finite. But it seems to me that the problem of existence is so bound up with the higher problem of Life, that what serves one must serve the other. There was a statement made that by existence one understood the body, and all that served its needs; by life, all that goes beyond the body—all that we vaguely call the mind, the soul, the intellectual process. Did you make it, or did I read it elsewhere?

It seems to me that this is too abrupt a dismissal of existence, for if existence is the cart horse that draws the vehicle of life, then surely it is important for that purpose alone, and those lesser human efforts that serve the problem of existence, must also serve life, by helping to preserve it.

The Elder.—That is undoubtedly true. But I think the same statement added that the importance of this problem was admitted, but that one drew aside from it. In truth, it was essential to draw aside, else the serious and deeper problem of life would have become buried under a mountain of books. Turn to the shelves of any library, if you wish to study man's prolonged attention to the visible problem of existence. From every aspect, social, political,

scientific, it has been analysed almost to a finality, and surely this wealth of industry justifies its importance to life.

But I still say that the closer it gets to conviction by material causes, the further it gets from understanding the chemical spirituality of life. Existence still remains a problem for those who have strong nerves, a good blood pressure, an indifference to ugly sights and smells; who have the *necessary* limitation of intellect that keeps them on the level course of finite discovery. One has gratitude and respect for these courageous souls; but it must not be forgotten that their effort to preserve Life exists only because the higher creative effort showed them what it was they sought to preserve.

For myself, since the reward of effort equals effort, I believe there is a high place reserved in the Futurity of Development for all these who struggle to keep the human pigsty clean, wholesome, and decorous; who labour to clear rocks and brambles from the road by which life passes. If their effort were not made, the high effort would be torn to pieces by wolves, and trampled on by pigs.

The service of Existence is a bodyguard for Life, and it would be a baseness not to acknowledge the value of its effort.

The Ageless One.—I am glad you admit this. But still, all that one has accepted of a material direction in life raises a certain doubt. This goal of Futurity is too inde-

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finite. To stimulate effort on earth, man must have a definite end in view. For me. I adore the Creative effort; I live in the shadow cast by great minds. But my work on earth is not creative. I do not even desire to create, but I do desire to see life on earth clean and beautiful, well ordered and justly disciplined. And I strive always to this end, which I believe attainable on earth. It is true that an analysis of the past does not justify this belief, so we are the more constrained to place our hopes in the future.

The Elder.—My friend, your hope and belief are altogether honourable. I also believe in a future for earth life, though I know it will never be realised on earth. But I disavow my knowledge and accept my belief, for I believe that the effort must be made Here as the beginning of the effort There.

One must accept this paradox, that the effort that does most good to earth can do no good to earth; but if one did not make it, there would be no futurity of effort elsewhere.

The logic of this paradox becomes a universal affirmation. Each man, whatever his degree, must leave the earth a better place than he found it. That is, he must leave the earth a better man than he came into it. And he can do this solely by accepting the test of life, acquiring knowledge and discipline of the senses, by clarifying his thought, and by individual

achievement, whether it be in the service of life or the service of existence.

The Ageless One.—Ah! that is better. Your theory of Aristocratic values may still be applied universally after all.

The Elder.—Incorrigible optimist! I see what you are already at. You wish to abstract from it a set of rules, so that hodmen and millionaires may come under its mantle and be saved. Out upon you, Good man and Progressivist that you are, will you never learn that moral precepts do not make for morality. Fine minds do not need them, base minds do not heed them. Good men make good rules, bad men make bad rules. That is, one lives a fine life because he has a fine mind, the other lives a dirty life because he has a dirty mind. The one moral condition is mental achievement, and there is no understanding high morality till one learns that intellectual man lives as an alien amid a horde of animals, made in his likeness. The difference between man and man is the difference between man and ape. You are deceived, because the human ape wears clothes, eats cooked food, reads the newspaper, takes an interest in polities, business, pleasure. Because he talks so glibly, you think he has a valuable soul. Why, in a generation, any savage can be taught these tricks of habit! When I say that each man must leave the earth a better man than he found it, I mean that each man does. But the human apes, they

do no more than eat, sleep, chatter, make love, and search for entertainment. They require only enough tricks to acquire these things, and their effort is to relax, not to develop. What if they are kind apes, cruel apes, ugly apes, handsome apes;—apes they remain, until they have acquired the individual power to discipline their minds and senses. Those who labour among them, striving to give them some higher ideas than monkey chatter, may do some good to their own souls, but little good to the apes. The apes must make the effort for themselves, or it has no value. And they have before them as a stimulus the example and works of higher minds. Good Samaritans, Philanthropists, good missionaries in the pig-sty, if you ever clean up this place, it will be much to the exasperation of the pigs. Morally, it is waste labour; only, like much that is wasted effort here, it must be made. We must keep the pig-sty clean, in order that the pigs may not infect mankind.

The Ageless One.—My love for all mankind makes this valuation hard to accept. For it seems to me that you dismiss in these missionary efforts something that is also noble. That desire for the betterment of others, has it no place in your cosmography of effort?

The Elder.—It has, but only for the betterment of those who seek to better others. Virtue is in disciplining oneself, not in being driven to discipline by rules. That is why the common people are such a nuisance in any

State. They have no power to think for themselves, therefore at any crisis, they surrender to emotion. Their sentimentality for themselves is the measure of their incapacity for any restraint, so that in times of disorder they rush to bloodshed, while parrotting cries of sentiment and morality. It has been a bad experiment, allowing common minds a say in matters of government, which is at all times a serious and difficult business, and requires a very large knowledge of material conditions. Time will doubtless rectify this evidence of tribal logic, which we call democracy.

But when you claim morality for those who labour for the betterment of others, I hope you are not confusing with them the egotists who take upon themselves the title of Saviours of mankind. Saviours of pigs, if you like, and let their claim to virtue be measured by its intention, since egotism will stand in any filth, to gratify its lust for generous emotion.

Saviours of mankind! The true morality insists that each man must save himself. That is, he must develop himself. Their arrogance is insupportable. Do you think a Jew like Jesus could save a mind like Shakespeare's? Do you think Praxiteles would condescend to listen to a mob orator? Those who save mankind are those who create great works, not those who surrender to political sentimentality.

In truth, it is almost impossible to approach this question with any clarity of thought, since such a mountain of false sentiment has been reared about this trivial episode in a distant Roman province.

Where do you apply it to-day? If you are a coward, you say that life is hard, cruel, full of pain and difficulty. You find injustice in all social arrangements. You find the rich base one profiting at the expense of the poor base one. You wish to alter all this, so you find as noble one who raises a cry of protest, who, being helpless to avert the conditions he detests preaches submission to them as a virtue, promises as a reward of submission a crown of glory, and, as you suppose, sacrifices himself willingly in order to enforce his teaching.

This story appeals to your humanity: you find flawless this logic that demands help for the weak, release for the suffering, and submission to the hardness of life. You like these sentiments which abound with sickly and pretty tenderness, where the emblems of sexual ecstasy are applied as a spiritual doctrine.

“Come unto me all ye that are heavily laden and I will give you rest.” In other words, “This life is a vile business, to be scrambled through somehow or other, by submission, weeping, and cries for divine assistance; by doping one’s mind with dreams of Heaven, in short, by any means save accepting it with courage and cheerfulness.”

EPILOGUE.

Worst of all, this Jew imposed the belief that suffering ennobles, and that the poor, the base, the wicked and the dull are those chosen for martyrdom here in order to inherit the reward of the Hereafter.

Despicable supposition! Suffering is not noble. To succumb to suffering is to succumb to degradation. Physical pain is the common lot, and all must accept it with stoicism. Mental pain is a test of mental discipline. As for a little cold and hunger, the very smallest effort can release man from these.

No, the suffering that cries for relief is that which refuses to help itself. It wishes to impose itself as a tax on all that refuses to suffer, all that has the courage for its own effort to advance.

The truth is, this Jew cried out against certain social conditions, but most of all, he cried out against the problem of the belly. And he covered his protest with such an Oriental fervour of sentiment that we see that all this tenderness and pity for man springs from the meanest of all human emotions, self pity.

In truth, what higher message could one expect from the mind of a Jew. This race has always sought physical relief from the problem of the intellect. Even the Jew's own excuse for his baseness is its own stigma. A nation is not made base because it is called base. It is called base because it *is* base.

And this Galilean artisan was typical of his race. He had the gift of all lesser in-

tellects, oratory; he had the emotionalism of a suppressed people. With these he was able to stir up the mob to epileptic passion. At the best, he was only half intelligent, a feminine mind, excited, suffering and sentimental, with a constricted vision of life picked up on the scrap heaps of Greek mysticism.

It is the finality of this episode that has obscured what is genuinely human in it. The man suffering a harsh death—we remember that; but we forget the young demagogue, intoxicated by a sudden success, moving against constituted authority with a mob at his heels. Do you suppose he designed to get into trouble with the police? The truth is, he forgot till too late that with a mob behind, he in front must go forward. He leads by being pushed. It is true he held himself well when brought to justice for disturbing the peace, but what political fanatic could wish to die better than in the fervour of gratified martyrdom. History reproduces such episodes by the hundred, and all such types accept crucifixion with religious fervour.

But do not be blind to the real nature of this small political revolution, nipped in the bud because the Roman rule was too stable for a few sans-culottes to disturb it. You forget that it happened to fail. If it had succeeded, we would have seen follow what always follows in the sudden supremacy of the common people, an orgy of revenge and bloodshed. So all such revolutions start, voicing the tenderest sen-

timent of universal brotherhood, and end by glutting themselves with a private lust for destruction. Jesus in the mouth of Robespierre, Jesus in the mouth of Lenin, we have seen two such episodes succeed, and we know that the cry of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity is the people's battle cry of revenge against all that is higher, nobler, and more upright than themselves.

The Ageless One.—But you forget that those who impose unjust conditions on the common people deserve their revenge.

The Elder.—Not so; those who live under unjust conditions nearly always deserve them. See how impossible it is for this Russian mob to use freedom now that it has absolute license. You say time will mitigate these vile actions that are going on there now. No, not time, but the gradual necessity that will force the mob to hand over the government of themselves to higher minds, for their own protection. But why occupy one's thought with these problems of the human animal? Man will solve them in time, because man has intellect and the mob only blind passion. Your humanity has insisted on the human aspect of the Galilean episode, and if you still cling to the tender belief that Jesus died for mankind, let your lust for sacrifice be appeased by remembering that mankind has been dying for Jesus ever since.

But we have had enough of this Jew. He has stood too long in the way of all serious efforts to understand the higher

morality. Let him remain what he has always been, a God for the common people, as his father was a God for savages, and his other absurd relation, the Holy Ghost, a God for High Church Curates.

Humanitarianism is at best a sanitary measure, not a moral one, but it is none the less an essential problem. As there is no standard yet on earth to fix upon the life that *must* be preserved, it is well to preserve all life, and let futurity throw what is worthless in the human scrap heap of outer space.

The Ageless One.—On earth, one cannot dismiss this problem in your high-handed way. We who would build a fine State, build it for all. One cannot make a distinction between a class that does one species of work and a class that does another. All classes have their value.

The Elder.—What intelligent mind thinks of class distinctions? There is only one distinction between man and man, and that is the one between man and ape. Intellect grows by maturity of effort, handed down the centuries. It comes to light in whatever channel its blood flows, and one may suppose that the reason why most intellect appears in the middle class of society is that this is the most stable and well ordered portion of any community, and therefore life is best preserved by it.

And you, whose effort goes to making earth existence clean and durable, do a

great service to life, for you preserve it against the attack of human wolves, who seek always to disorder the process of existence, in order to satisfy the animal desire for revenge and bloodshed. Direct your effort then to building the great human state. What matter if another century sees it in ruins. The effort that made it will continue; the intellect that it protected and matured will live on; its message Here, its spirit There. Why shed tears over a few ruins of stone and mortar? These mark only the dwelling places of man's body. Do you think the Greek genius was wasted because the Greek nation disappeared? We have still the tradition of their Art and thought, and more than that, we have the actual tradition of their blood. You think that a fantastic thought, but it is the most plausible of truths. For think a moment. Behind every human being alive to-day there is an unbroken chain going back to the dawn of man on earth. Blood is not remade each generation. It is a current that has never ceased running, and even in stray instances such as we may observe in the portraits of some line of kings do we see how exactly the generations reproduce each other.

The Ageless One.—Yes, but equal facial characteristics do not mean an equality of thought. Our experience on earth teaches us that the productive father does not produce productive sons. One might almost believe that the father's effort used up, that of the

sons' and left them but the residue of his mental fatigue.

The Elder.—That, too, I once believed, but I see now that the logic of effort disproves it. Why else the continued striving of all higher minds for something higher than themselves? That is an implanted impulse. If it were not so, effort would decay and perish. Our inability to follow the direction of effort is because of the shortness of earth life. We are too pressed for time to understand that time is not a measurable quantity. But when I say that effort continues to reproduce itself, I do not mean that effort surpasses itself. That would be altogether a progressive theory, and I do not believe that man on earth progresses. I believe only that the primitive conditions of germination and birth, which govern all earth growth, are essential also to the birth of life. Here it is born, here it advances to the limit of an earthly intellect, bound by the limitations of its five senses, shut up in a world whose knowledge is governed by the visibility of matter, and shut off from all else by an impenetrable curtain of harsh light.

This, and this alone is our problem on earth. All your tormented political problems are as ephemeral as the change of time that decays one growth in order to renew another. They matter only for the sixty or seventy years that may span a human life. The one thing that endures is the human intellect that refuses to be sub-

merged by the savagery of earth conditions, that accepts the problem of this life here as the problem of its own growth, and in growing achieves its effort, passes that on as the stimulus of fresh effort, and ascends to a higher effort elsewhere.

And this achievement is of the earth, rendered back to earth in Blood and Spirit. Do not doubt it.

The Ageless One.—No, I do not doubt it. My love for man's achievement forces me to accept it. But I would be happier for light on the enigma of man's intellect.

The Elder.—All efforts to penetrate this enigma must return to the Greek. For there is no explanation for the Greek. From barbarism, he reached civilisation at a step; a civilisation of thought and art higher than any yet achieved. In truth, the history of man begins here, for all that went before is only decorated barbarism. It is back-stairs logic to suppose the Greek arrived by way of the Egyptians. What the Egyptian had given up in despair as a formula, the Greek infused with passion and beauty. And that in the space of a few hundred years. The Greek did not advance by the tentative efforts of other nations. He arrived, saw what they had failed to do, and did it perfectly.

So all great genius arrives at an epoch. It sees the abortive efforts of those about it, and perfects them. That it uses the same symbols and the same material, is only to say that it uses the symbols and mate-

rials of life. The tentative efforts do not show the way; the way is shown by life, and genius throws a sudden and brilliant light upon it. Without the Greek effort, we might still be blundering in darkness.

But how explain swiftness and certainty of that effort?

Do we know the meaning of that word "Inspiration," which we use so glibly? We do not. Our scholarship is the evidence of our scepticism and our inability to crawl save by the aid of facts.

No, facts do not explain inspiration; do not explain the Greek. But the Greek did not doubt the nature of inspiration.

Come, let us throw our crutches to the devil, and accept for once the unbelievable. It is this:

The Greek genius came from suggestion, implanted in this single race from some higher source of life. One may surely affirm that, since it cannot be proved. And affirming it, one can affirm that the tradition of Greek blood is alive to-day, setting alight a spark of genius through the centuries, and battling always with the black torrent of barbarism that strives to surround and overwhelm it. All who seek the higher development of Art and life follow where the Greek led. Then is not this to say that the Greek still leads? And still surrounding this lonely effort, keeping pace with it, is the barbarism that surrounded it then.

Why did the mass of mankind turn to the Jew for a solution to life? Because the mass of mankind springs from barbarism, and the Jew with his bible is its emblem, gloomy, morbid, terrified and bloodthirsty.

And what cuts off all refined minds from this savage heritage of blood? Beauty and gaiety, courage in the face of actuality, the acceptance of life. And these are our heritage from the Greek.

The Ageless One.—If your supposition be true, we who love all mankind have lavished much love where we might have been better employed in taming wild animals. But it is past midnight, and I will be frank with you. Behind my love for man I detect also something of self-love, something even of self-pity. Yet it seems to me we seek something deeper in our efforts than the mere good of mankind——

The Elder.—We seek the power of a higher good in ourselves. By finding this alone can we confer good on others. At our highest, we create great art, great thought. A step below that, we carry the tradition of Creative Art by loving it. Without us, it would preach to pigs, parrots, wolves and rabbits. Do you think there is not work for us elsewhere, who have found so palpable a direction for work on earth?

Come, a glass of your wine. I drink to you, my friend, and to the acceptance of Life, by which signpost one treads the gay road to Death.

THE HIDDEN SYMBOL

WHEN the essay under the title of *Creative Effort* was written, it seemed clear that something more was needed beyond its affirmation in general terms of a belief in Life and Art.

All such terms as Life, Death, Existence Mind, Art, Vision, Consciousness, are not capable of finite definition. They must remain the symbols of an individual expression of mind, as diverse in application as they are diverse in human understanding.

The truth would seem to be that an exact communication of thought is impossible on earth, save only in those rare instances where there is an equal understanding of the same symbols of thought.

There is involved here a subtlety, which adds to the power to understand the *right* to understand. If we could grasp fully the nature of this division between mind and mind, we might know more of that profound inequality of mind which would seem to be the basis of all high morality.

But in the present state of low human development, which we call Civilization, confusion must attend all efforts to define an individual vision of Life.

Where all symbols of thought are fluid, automatically discarded and re-adjusted by each generation, any attempt to arrive at a universal statement of belief is out of the question.

To do so, it would be necessary to re-write the dictionary, or be content to talk the language of another planet.

Nevertheless, having embarked on an effort to affirm belief, it becomes inevitable that one must make a further effort to define the nature

of this affirmation, and so *The Hidden Symbol* was written as an analysis of *Creative Effort*.

It is hoped that the statement of belief made here will not be mistaken for any desire to proselytize. All efforts to arrive at an understanding of man's destiny on earth can do no more than define a personal vision of Life and Mind on Earth.

At the best they remain a problem of self analysis, which seeks to define what cannot be explained.

Yet the belief stated in these essays is sufficiently definite to expect repudiation. It is offered with the paradox that its best affirmation must come from those who reject it. Those who can affirm any such individual expression of belief, have already affirmed it.

If that mysterious element we call consciousness is at all understood here, the self-protective impulse in humanity must reject any effort to arouse it to consciousness.

We see clearly that the struggle to exist on earth has forced opacity on the human mind.

Man does not seek Truth because he dare not.

Stupidity is his opiate against all that is terrible and unknown. That which is sought in religion is not a belief, but a narcotic. The demand is physical, not mental; and if that overstressed system of nerves and blood pressure which is mistaken on earth for Mind, rejects a stimulant too painful for it, one can do no more than endorse the rejection before it is uttered.

N.L.

Springwood, 1919.

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THE Social structure exists solely to produce life.
Life exists to develop Mind.

Let these statements remain at present merely affirmative. They are the basis of a problem we must attack.

Two suppositions have always existed side by side to explain the existence of life on earth, towards each of which man has leaned for the support of a logical conclusion.

One has supposed a materialistic creation of life by natural forces. The other has sought a mystic conception of creation by divine agency.

The materialistic theory reaches by induction from finite causes in search of a first cause.

The mystic theory begins by a supposition of a first cause, which it denies by accepting also finite causes.

Both arrive at the same enigma; both complete the circle of complete ignorance.

Let us discard both theories; they serve no end. Man has beaten his head long enough at the blank wall of supposition to explain himself by the evidence of God or the evidence of matter. Both theories are useless, for they overlook the prime problem, which is life itself.

Not where life comes from, nor where life goes to, but what life *is*. That is the problem for us

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who exist on earth, for our existence is in itself both the question and answer to its own enigma.

An effort has been made elsewhere to posit the duality of man's destiny on earth, between the bare struggle for existence and the higher effort of intellectual development.

The lower process we call Existence—the higher, Life.

And the construction of man himself is in part with this duality; the cause of his duality.

For to an animal organism, germinated by the conditions of earth, subject to its laws of growth and decay, man has added another process, distinct from the first, yet existing by it; obsessed by it, yet always at war with it; hating it and loving it; struggling to contain himself by it and against it; in short, the eternal paradox of that effort to conquer the problem of intellect by the senses which obstruct the effort, but without which the effort cannot be made.

In the confusion of these two processes: life and existence, spirit and brute, all earthly effort is involved. But the threads of each are inextricably mixed. Whatever takes us from one leads us to the other. Whatever the one affirms, the other denies. We are carried forward only to be dragged back again; the head spins at this ceaseless advance and recoil, and in despair of being one or the other we cease to be either.

Well, this problem of mind and matter, spirit and brute, life and existence, this is the insoluble problem of intellect, and because it is insoluble it must be attacked; for the test of intellect is not the investigation of finite knowl-

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edge, but the investigation of infinite ignorance. The attack has never succeeded yet, but it must be made, for without this prime effort intellect must decay on earth.

Perhaps if we find only a new direction for the attack something will be gained, but to gain that the effort must be long and sustained.

Furthermore, we must be prepared to think alone, and when thought takes a lonely course we must be prepared to be misunderstood. To be easily understood one must think on the level of accepted belief, and all accepted belief is the evidence of a lack of thought.

For of all directions that human effort may take, thought must be the manifestation of a single mind, not the chorus of a thousand minds.

When all have agreed to think alike, all have agreed to give up the effort to think. Therefore all minds hesitate at this unknown door, which may lead to the only place of isolation on earth, that of the mind that thinks alone.

At the threshold of every enquiry into the destiny of man there stands the enigma of that symbol we call Mind.

We know what is the effect of Mind, we do not know what Mind is. We know what Mind can create, we do not know what inspired the impulse to create. We know why we arrive at thought, we do not know the basis from which we set out to think.

The history of man does not begin with man, but with Mind. Man is an ephemeral thing, blown upon by every wind of chance, necessity, and passion. The history of events might be

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written any way, for they might have happened any way ; but Mind manifests itself in one way, as one thing. Its stability is greater than the attack of accident. All that can disrupt man, all that can disturb existence, all this cannot affect Mind.

For Mind is the symbol of a perfection that goes beyond earth life. Whatever its earthly expression may be, itself remains hidden.

If we cannot explain the symbol of Mind, we have much that Mind reveals. Therefore our search must go to understand the nature of that revelation.

TRUTH—KNOWLEDGE

NO two symbols are so commonly confused as these. This is inevitable, for these two symbols might be exchanged for Life, and Existence.

Truth is a thing sought; Knowledge a thing found.

Existence is served by finite knowledge.

Life by the search for truth.

Since existence on earth is casual, accidental, at the mercy of necessity, finite knowledge is its first essential, for by it we understand its material problems and are able to force some sort of order upon its primitive disorder. By finite knowledge we arrive at comfort, security, certainty.

But the search for truth leads away from these things.

It presents us with darkness, uncertainty, insoluble problems. It is by the stimulus of these difficulties that intellect is matured. Therefore it is not in finding, but in seeking, that we understand what the symbol of Truth is.

We understand that truth is an element which must not be known, but which must be known to exist.

Truth, in short, is a problem, not of development, but of developing.

The dictum of science rejects all that cannot be proved by demonstrable evidence. It seeks finite knowledge, all visible and coherent phenomena that must come to the mind for examination through the senses.

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It posits as a first essential that the senses are perfected things; that evidence adduced from them is impeccable.

But the senses themselves are a blind process. They are no more than the evidence an insect receives of material things by the contact of its antennae.

A dog has the same mechanical lens for seeing as man, but necessity has forced him to develop first his sense of smell, so that he cannot be sure of what he sees till he has also smelt it.

Now it is clear that we rely for our sense of vision on just such a defective apparatus, for sight itself cannot define the shape of an object till the mind has defined the nature of the object. And our whole conception of the visible world exists on this insecure foundation, which is that of a thing first seen, secondly distinguished by shape from another thing, and thirdly defined by a symbol.

And this process is nearly always one of definition, not of explanation.

The retort to this is inevitable. We must seek explanation by this defective process, because it is all we have. It is uttered here to arrest those positive assertions which are made so readily on the senses alone, and it must lead to this deduction:

Our knowledge is due to what element of perfection our senses may possess; our ignorance is due to their manifest imperfections. Therefore it is less important to accept our knowledge than to question our ignorance.

It is from this basis of Imperfection that we must set out to discover the symbol of Perfection, which is in exact reversal of the scientific

adventure, for again be it said, the statement of science is, ‘I will not investigate a problem that it not capable of finite conclusion.’”

Surely this is a negation of what higher knowledge is, for knowledge in itself is not a finite thing, but a state of being, a state of exercise by scepticism and enquiry; in short, a state of developing.

And every finite conclusion arrived at arrests this process, for once a condition of mind is accepted on the basis of a material understanding it becomes static, it ceases to advance.

Is this manifest?

The thing we know by proof cannot have value, for it cannot have stimulus. By discovery, the search has ended. If life is to continue in action it must have the stimulus towards action, not the relaxation of an action accomplished. On this basis must rest the problem of intellect, which is a state of developing by the stimulus of the unknown quantity.

I hope it is understood that one uses the word development as a state of mind, a state of being, not a condition of existing, which is always static.

Therefore it must be said, without deference to all furious protests, that which is called finite knowledge is not knowledge at all, but observation. It is the discovery of a thing or a condition that was only waiting to be discovered.

The discovery of radium was a material fact observed, not a truth demonstrated. What it demonstrated was a very slow and minute process of human observation, but spiritually, or intellectually, there is no advance made here. The advance is a material one, and its service

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a definite use for a material purpose, such as disease, or a perception of atomic forces.

It has no intellectual stimulus because it offers no revelation of the universal mind, in which resides the symbol of Truth. For Truth cannot exist outside man, and man, to have a meaning, must be expressed by mind. Therefore the effect of Truth is to reveal yourself to yourself, and what can you know of yourself by knowing a theory of atomic forces?

It leaves the mind as morally cold as a theory of the origin of Tittlebats, and so, in short, does all discovery in finite knowledge.

If you are convinced that life on earth is an end in itself, by all means find your heaven in the observation of material facts.

But we seek here an understanding that earth life is a temporary affair, a probation, cut off from the higher condition of life, not by death, but by the imperfection of its senses. We seek for the one evidence that connects us with that higher life, and that is the symbol of a higher perfection of life than earth life can offer us.

Now, the conclusion of science that knowledge consists of the investigation and proof of finite things, rests on the most unstable of all foundations—a foundation just as flimsy as that which is claimed for revealed religion.

It bases all agreements on the assumption that human intellect is in itself a perfected thing.

The most casual glance at life refutes such an assumption. Nothing is so diverse, so un-

equal, and so uncertain of direction as the human equipment of sense and intellect. It can range from something little better than a dog's instinct to the revelation of a mind like Shakespeare's; therefore, what standard of assurance have we to assume perfection? Or are we to argue that Shakespeare's intellect was a perfected one, and accept that as a fixed standard? Why, the paradox of earthly intellect is expressed in such a valuation, for the very evidence of Shakespeare's intellect is the evidence of a universal imperfection of intellect.

The whole bent of such a mind is to reveal the universal mind, and then to stand helplessly questioning the enigma of its revelation.

I do not believe there ever was a mind that realised so completely as Shakespeare's the transient, irresponsible nature of existence as compared with the profound intention of intellect to reveal itself, and the profound enigma of why it seeks to reveal itself.

When the highest intellect stops short at a conviction of its own imperfection, what standard of perfection can any other intellect claim for its valuation of intellect.

It is mere helplessness, tiredness, that drives the scientific, the aesthetic, and the religious mind to positive assertion on matters of knowledge or belief, for assertion gives a sense of stability, and the human mind, adrift on an incomprehensible sea, is glad of any rock to cling to.

Indeed, there is a sort of necessity that drives the mind to discard questioning, and cling to assertion. A thing defined is a thing done with, but a question without answer is an

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intolerable state of unrest. Assertion gives the mind a breathing space, so that it is able to relax. The necessity for relaxation is also physical, for it obeys the imperious demand of the nerves for peace. Therefore, of necessity, we repudiate the mental effort that goes beyond our power to sustain effort, and stop thinking in order to state conclusions.

And all finite knowledge rests on a stated conclusion, so that all such conclusions bring us to a point of rest, of relaxation, of giving up effort.

Is such an end, then, the adventure of intellect? Or does the materialist insist that all these small efforts that end in relaxation will arrive some day at a big effort, which will also end in a final finite conclusion, and a final relaxation. Then that would mean that we had arrived at the end of life, for when all things are settled, finite, and concluded, there will be no need for further effort. In short, there will be no further need for life.

In order to recall the mind from this Nirvana of finite knowledge we must return to the real problem of intellect, which is its hidden symbol; the stimulus of effort.

There is no "The Truth," there is only the individual expression of "Its Truth." And each sincere effort to express Its Truth seeks a direction by the symbol already planted in the mind.

Whence came this symbol?

We listen in vain for an answer to that enigma, and, perhaps, because there is no answer we will arrive at one. If the symbol of intellect is given it is sufficient for our limited powers to make the search for it. And this search for the hidden symbol, be it a sense of perfection in Truth, Beauty, Justice, is the conscious problem of intellect, though its unconscious expression may be in Creative art, or in all that reveals the human mind.

And, again, because the higher symbol must be sought by its lower emblem in life, it is by realising the imperfection of such an emblem that we come closest to realising what may be its perfection. It is because of injustice that we posit a perfect symbol of justice; it is because of knowing ugliness that we reach for an understanding of beauty. Since there is no standard of beauty or justice on earth, we posit for them a symbol of what such things might be.

The mind that discards this problem submits to apathy. It has thrown aside its birthright of ignorance for a little mental security.

By different roads the scientist and the Christian reach the same point.

Says Science: "I will not investigate this problem because it is insoluble."

Says the Christian: "I will not investigate this problem because I have solved it."

In both the moral evasion is apparent; for both refuse effort in different ways.

But let us put the strongest line of demarcation between these two types of mind. From the standard of material values, one is the most useful of minds, the other the most useless.

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The scientific effort is not undervalued if its direction is stated to be other than purely intellectual. It has devoted its effort to a passionate and sustained observation of apparent phenomena, and however brief may be our period of earth life we are grateful to all that has rendered it safer and more comfortable.

In spite of much that is idle and pedantic in the scientific effort, it must be rated as the most useful and industrious servant of the social structure that we possess.

But the Christian, from both material and spiritual standards, is the most useless. This mind has always sought to impose itself on society as the one moral valuation, and to do this it has used fear and submission to God as a means of destroying man's courage and confidence in himself.

Morally the Christian is a bad mind, because it has sought to place this submission to doctrine, which it calls God, as a higher thing than individual development; socially it is a bad mind, because it contributes nothing to the general good; economically it is a bad mind, because its institutions exist by pauperage on society; and politically it is the worst of minds, for whenever it had power it has sought to meddle with the simple procedure of existence, to impose its code of rules by bloodshed, and to attack in every way the lonely effort of intellect to advance by its own private convictions.

That it has carried simpletons along with it in its attack on the higher mind does not count. These minds are caught like straws in any current that snatches them up. They do not think they submit to emotion, and Christianity has al-

ways known how to stir up the common mind by destroying its moral equilibrium. "Pity, tenderness, love for man, submission to God"; behind these outeries it has secured itself from detection in order to attack beauty, courage, intellect, and all efforts to develop.

Anger is inseparable from the wrongs mankind has suffered from this vile conspiracy against its courage and uprightness, the memory of bodies tortured and intellects silenced; the created emblems of beauty mutilated and destroyed.

But there is yet another aspect from which to view this obscure attack of resentment on life, a view which may help to dissipate anger. Since the Christian is a reactionary mind; a mind which posits a static condition of belief as a higher condition than the individual effort to advance by scepticism and enquiry, it contributes nothing to the problem of intellect.

Therefore it is a mind relaxed, a negation of effort, and so a mind that does not matter. Its significance is only political, and of the earth, earthy; a mind that does not express a state of intellect, but a state of emotional antipathy to intellect. A serious nuisance it may be; a serious problem it is not.

Has there been enough said to distinguish the higher impulse that seeks to express a symbol of perfection already implanted in the mind, from the lower impulse that is content to select from material things an emblem of that perfection?

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The two impulses are merged, so merged that there is an eternal confusion in our minds between one and the other; for both express themselves by the same mediums, both seek the same emblems of expression.

To approach this question we must first seek the nature of that condition which supplies material for the expression of intellect, and this is the visible structure of life on earth.

And here we must be prepared to turn like a weathercock, for winds blow from all directions, and all at once. Why, even this simple procedure by which man fills his belly and clothes his back would seem to be such an incomprehensible problem that hardly a mind can approach it without confusion, and when there is added to it the effort to analyse the impulse of life, which it supports, the confusion of cries becomes deafening, the diversity of roads to it bewildering.

Those who live within the visible structure of existence, live by an illusion of order. The procedure of an occupation alone gives this sense to the mind; habit and monotony of events suggest stability, to which an inability to think adds complacence. These are village minds, simple and primitive, concerned with the barter of goods, the acquirement of security, comfort, and a little entertainment. Their best thoughts go no higher than polities, which regulate their system of barter, and certain sociological problems by which they formulate rules for conduct, which they call morality, and by which they are forever striving to define a private ideal of decorum. Their confusion of mind consists in

striving to fit themselves to these rules, rather than fitting the rules to themselves, and as they have been for centuries muddled by priestcraft, witchcraft, and bad law-makers, it is no wonder that even the social problem presents to them insuperable difficulties.

Nothing can be more absurd than to fall foul of the common mind for its inability to conceive a higher morality than that of conduct, or a deeper problem than necessity. It seeks the best standard it is able to understand, which is to strive for a common law for the good of the greatest number, and to maintain its security as best it can by the order of society. And this is for ever subject to the stress of circumstance, wars, pestilence, mob disorder, political disruption, added to the human stress of emotion, nervous exhaustion, and physical pain, so that its complacence is constantly disturbed, and its rules of conduct for ever at the mercy of necessity.

It has been said before that good and evil are terms too subtle for this process which exists as a social procedure imposed by man on necessity. Here, good must be that which soothes, comforts, makes for security and ease; evil all that disturbs and makes for distress. Here, virtue will consist in upholding the common agreement on conduct and order, and vice will be all that breaks rules and repudiates bargains. For these reasons the worst minds in a community are not those of the mere criminal brute, who is an outcast, and hardly human, but the arrogant, envious, turbulent minds, be they kings or labour agitators, who are constantly

thrusting their trivial egotisms before the common process of existence and seeking to disturb the common mind.

This common process of existence, then, is the material from which intellect must draw its material; this is the outward and visible spectacle of man on earth.

Here we are at the intersection of all roads, amid the confusion of all cries. By what road are we to approach it; from what cry are we to take a direction?

From that of the Progressivists; the Economists, the good Politicians and Law-givers, to whom the sound of machinery is music; who love the uproar of markets, where commodities are bought and sold; who are forever pulling down one regulation in order to put up another; who exist always in the dust and noise of affairs; who are happiest in pushing the bovine human herd here and there, and who march for ever round in circles, chanting: "See how fast we move forward"?

Or will you approach with the Sentimentalists, those who exhibit the tenderness of their hearts in cries of pity and indignation; who laugh and cry in a breath; who wish to remedy all injustice by an appeal to emotion; who are enchanted by little gaieties, little prettinesses; who overflow at the sight of flowers and children, and who believe that all brutal and ugly things should be banished by law, and that life should exist by the rules of a young ladies' seminary?

Or will you go with the Satirists, those half-minds surcharged with spleen, which they eject at all they see; who hold a quivering school-

master's rod at humanity ; who demand cleanliness and are always looking for dirt ; whose bitterness eats into itself, like a corrosive acid, till the core of the mind is rotten, so that it cannot distinguish between good or bad, beauty or ugliness, but seeks as an end that vileness which it has set out to attack ?

Or will you march with the Romanticists, whose minds are filled with the visions of great and terrible deeds, of a splendid pageantry of human action and passion ; who love tragic and powerful events ; who see in the spectacle of life colour, sound, mystery and violence ; who mix blood with tapestry, and who love most to see man at war with Destiny, without troubling whether his acts are good or bad, so that they be great and dramatic ?

Or will you arrive with the Psychologists, those who follow the thread of motives, rather than actions ; who love to pry and deduct, to posit difficult human dilemmas, and watch their puppets' efforts to disentangle them ; who seek for the mind beneath its disguise of the face ; who are indifferent to its value, so that its nature is disclosed ; who stand apart from all sentiment, all judgment, even from themselves ; who are themselves the subject of a remorseless inquisition.

Or will you join the Critical minds, those who seek for labels in the confusion of all other minds, who state a personal taste as a general principle ; or who state a general principle and make it a personal taste ; who are capricious, exacting, formal and legal ; who pigeon-hole all human effort ; who are for ever casting up a

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profit and loss account with intellect—minds useful where they are able to appreciate and select, and nuisances where they are only the expression of an abortive desire to create?

Or will you find a path by your favourite mind, the mind you cling to when all else fails, the Scientific mind, which exists for a passionless curiosity; which would put a railed fence round the universe for tourists; a mind with such a sense of the proportions of an atom that it has no sense of the proportions of human passion; a mind of indestructible gravity whose spectacles glitter behind delicate and complicated mechanisms; the most useful and industrious of minds, powerful and narrow, seeing so clearly in one direction that it is blind to all other directions?

Then there is your Scholastic mind, the annotator and librarian, professing the wisdom of others, entrenched behind a retentive memory, which embalms the memory of mankind; a mind walled in by books, seeking ponderable matter which it learns by heart; in short, a compendium of what is already made.

Last of all, there are the Critics of life itself, the Philosophers, the Thinkers, those who seek morality in the confusion of all that is political, sentimental, romantic, scientific, and scholastic; those who are so engrossed with the spectacle of man as he is, that they are apt to turn on man in a fury for not being something else—those who first of all seek a passionate symbol of Justice in all things earthly, which they strive to vindicate by the blind mechanical uproar of existence itself.

Of all minds, we leave out of this list the Creative mind, for that is a compendium of all these, yet is none of these. For the assumption of the Creative mind is that it does not stop only at the spectacle of existence. By bringing to human thought the hidden symbol of a perfection higher than existence, it has already gone beyond existence. In short, it has gone a step beyond Life.

We see that none of these minds explain a direction for life, but a temperamental taste or vision of the spectacle of existence. Yet, since they view it from all aspects, they present from so many different angles of vision something of a universal vision of mind. The Critic of Life alone, we see, has sought from the universal mind a universal impulse in life, and from that universal impulse, has sought to divine a universal principle of morality.

But here, it would seem, morality is least apparent. It is because the universal mind is so irrational, so apparently lacking in singleness of purpose or direction, that the critic of life has become so enraged with life, so despairing for life. But we may surely say that if the best human minds agree on such a failure in perception, that very failure becomes the problem of acceptance, and we must seek elsewhere for the symbol of a universal purpose in existence.

It is because morality has been sought as a universal impulse, that the direction of morality has been obscured. The universal impulse is

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first of all physical, and exists to support itself under the precarious conditions of earth. To suppose that all mankind could come under one universal moral problem is to suppose that all men are of equal value. And this even the commonest earth valuation disproves. Men are so unequal in value that for the one life that cannot be spared a thousand might be thrown aside as valueless. It is only because on earth all minds must herd together that philosophy has been forced to consider mankind as a whole, instead of as a small minority of high value surrounded by a vast majority of hardly any value at all. The conditions of earth life impose a working value on mankind, not a moral one, and if there is a universal moral impulse, it must wait for a universal development beyond this life. If that is so, all that lacks development here may expect a protracted period of development elsewhere. That is the best we can suppose for this awkward problem.

The physical impulse to produce life is universal, but the intellectual impulse which develops life into mind is not universal. On the lesser plane of existence this development is broad and fairly general, but on the higher plane of pure intellect—that is, an intense perception of the symbol of intellect, the symbol of perfection, is very rare. But since it is the highest manifestation of intellect, it must of necessity vindicate the highest morality.

Therefore, here alone we must seek a universal principle of morality, but not a universal principle for all mankind.

Now, if these two functions, distinct from each other, yet existing by each other, are apparent and perceived, we have a distinct direction apparent in both.

We see clearly that the spectacle of existence, seen through the eyes of nervous and acute minds, is first of all a primitive process, built upon bare necessity, and maintaining its stability as best it can by the social structure. We see clearly by the irresponsibility of its mental impulses, its uncertain use of the social structure, its childish conception of morality, and yet its persistent determination to maintain itself on the earth, that it does not vindicate a moral purpose at all, but a physical one. Therefore we must seek for its one stable and eternal physical impulse, and that is apparent at a glance.

It exists to produce life by birth.

All that man supposes important in the social structure of existence is the most ephemeral of things. It begins to decay as soon as it is built. The history of social civilisation is written by its ruins; the ant-like industry of man constructs only for time and circumstance to destroy.

Even his cherished rules for conduct are as mutable as bricks and mortar, and fall to pieces at the pressure of necessity. In all this activity of man there is no stability of purpose beyond the immediate needs of the body, and the temporal security of its existence for a short period on earth. But life itself, the element of re-birth, goes on continually, universally. Therefore, if a lower morality can be stated, it must consist of all that helps and protects the process of

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birth, so that existence itself has a genuine basis for good and evil.

Evil is that which refuses to bear life, which puts silly social rules in the way of its production, and which, finally, may by accident, intention, or stupidity, destroy the mind born. For we must assume that every birth on earth has also a mind, till the process of development proves or disproves its existence. So all birth must be preserved, if only a portion of it is worth preserving.

If we accept this understanding of a universal physical purpose in existence, we see how misdirected is the zeal of those moralists who strive to force on it also a moral obligation other than its direct intention. We see how man himself, confused by these schoolmasters, has confused also his physical mission by striving to alter its direction, so that half his time he is repressing those very impulses which are the reason of his existence on earth.

And philosophy has been just as ill advised in forcing its effort away from the special nature of its mission on earth. Because it has recognised the seriousness of the universal physical impulse, it has striven to reconcile it with its own consciousness of a universal moral impulse.

To put a rough conclusion on this diversity of effort, we can only suppose that both impulses, physical and moral, are best left to do their own work in their own way. It is the intermeddling of one with the other that is the

cause of all physical and moral exasperation on earth. The critic of life who is most furious with the physical impulse for not also vindicating the moral impulse is only striving to force another to answer the question of which he himself is the answer in person.

In short, all that questions, also answers; for to perceive the problem of intellect is intellect. We return again here to the first principle of high morality, which is that which arrives by effort—not the fulfilment, or cessation of effort.

It is because the critic of life has confused the physical and moral direction of existence and life that he has turned on man with accusation of vileness and bestiality.

And this is the worst philosophical sin, for which philosophy must one day suffer shame also.

The physical structure of existence, when it is performing its natural function, is never vile or bestial. Its appetite may overrun discretion, certainly. It may mistake the means for the end, it may adore the instrument rather than its works, but the stimulus of this enthusiasm has been implanted for an end, and the end may be served, even if he who serves it performs with something of a perfervid lack of dignity. We trust that our sense of humour, which we mistake for sexual fastidiousness, will not let us carry these emotional pranks too far, but they are better performed in an amorous frenzy than not performed at all.

A sensitive mind may shrink a little from all that attends the animal function of procreation and birth, just as it may shrink from feeding on

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the dead bodies of animals, but the problem of this distaste is not to proclaim it as holy, but to conquer it as human. Where the feeble, useless rejection of life flies to celibacy as an escape, the fastidious mind seeks to make it formal and ritualistic, and makes a public parade of not knowing what it is doing in public.

But this sort of thing is inevitable, for where the normal physical process confuses itself with that of morality, it will chatter and utter absurdities, and pretend that it is about quite another business. And because shame has been forced on it, it will hide behind little false ideals and sentimentalities, and call desire a spiritual function.

But surely all this prattle is excusable, and since the moralist himself has been the cause of these falsities, he should be the last to express anger at them.

Here at last is a universal impulse, the eternal pivot of all man's activity and persistence.

We see that where the normal physical procedure of existence is viewed by a high mind, such as Plato's or Nietzsche's, it will strive to repress distaste and replace for it a fine ideal of physical uprightness, and a mastery of its functions, not a slavery to them, but the vulgar critic, such as Carlyle, turns only to fury and anathema.

Carlyle, in truth, is a perfect example of that egotistic frenzy which is the cause of the very condition it attacks.

It may be entertaining and instructive to examine such a mind, but the problem of morality is hardly any clearer for it. We see first of all

that because the enigma of the Universe presses on it like a nightmare, it is most enraged with man for being unable to explain the enigma. A notorious failure in good taste is apparent in these exasperated questioners, in that they seldom turn on themselves for a solution. They have so much contempt for man that they have none left to bestow on themselves.

Muttering and enraged, they sit in a den, glaring out at the common people with hatred, and when this emotion becomes unbearable, they break into cries and insults.

“ Idiots, fools, cretins, since you are what you are, why do you persist in being what you are? Since I conceive you should be something different to what you are, why does not my conception of you perform a miracle on you, and turn you into so many replicas of itself. As you are, you are a farce, an absurdity, a thing too trivial to exist. Then why do you exist, or do you exist? Most terrible thought of all, why do *I* exist. I must have an answer from you: to get it, I will burrow into you, tear all coverings from you, exhibit you naked and absurd, so that all mankind may gaze on the spectacle of its own insignificance. What! the deeper I go, the less I find; nothing here, nothing there; down, down at the bottom of all—mud, slime and the blind protoplasm from which you spring. This, then, is all you offer me, this handful of primal mud which I throw in your face—in the face of the Universe”

Softly, good bull, the moon will not come out of the bucket because you roar for it. This

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anger does not express a lack of nobility in others, as you intend it should, but a lack of restraint in yourself. Leave the common people alone; they are engaged on their own affairs. But you persist in treating the common mind as your wife, and throwing boots at it. Why? Is this because you are only the other half of the common mind yourself?

Is the assumption clear that the social and physical structure exists solely to produce life, and the moral problem of life is its own development?

These statements do not attempt to answer the enigma of what life is, but they are an answer to those who find no reason for the enigma. The same induction that leads us to accept morality as the problem of development by the stimulus of the unknown, leads us also to accept the enigma of life as the prime stimulus of its own development.

If this understanding is accepted, we have at least a clear road by which to approach the problem of morality, and that is its manifestation of intellect on earth. This must come to a separate analysis, so perhaps it would be wise to cross-examine once more those aspects of the physical problem that are merged in the moral problem, and that is most of all apparent in the precarious conditions under which birth is produced on earth.

THE BIRTH OF LIFE

THE Elder Mind and the Ageless Mind are again seated together, reading. Where before there was a trace of antagonism between them, now they appear to understand each other with a better urbanity.

The Ageless Mind (putting down his book):

I have read so far, and it seems to me that the condition of the social structure is sufficiently explained if its purpose is to produce and protect life on earth. But this explanation brings me to a difficulty. If birth is the first essential to the production also of intellect, the disorder and precariousness of earth life must surely be a great danger to the growth of intellect, since it may not only kill intellect before it is developed, but may even cause intellect not to be born at all.

Surely there is something very wrong here, if the highest emblem of morality must depend for its existence on so hap-hazard a procedure.

The Elder: That is a just objection, and needs to be examined. It is undoubtedly true that existence appears to go on in a complete muddle. The uncertainty of physical and social conditions has been sufficiently stressed here already, and the conditions of birth are at their mercy. Even the animals breed under less precarious conditions than man.

The Ageless One: That is apparent, for man is the chief danger to the animal

world. But we might also say that man is the greatest danger to himself. Now, I am prepared to believe that the enigma of life itself is essential to man's development, since it keeps him mentally alive, but I cannot see what end is served by the uncertain conditions of birth, for there is no enigma there, and they are clearly at man's disposal to alter for the better.

The Elder: Perhaps just because they are at man's disposal they are so badly managed. But I see you are already starting with the premise that natural conditions are at the disposal of a supreme power to alter at will. Suppose no such thing. Suppose natural conditions to be what they are,—the effect of necessity, arriving as best they can at a condition of existing. We have been so long accustomed to that emblem of mental sloth, Providence, that we thrust all difficulties on the back of this absurdity.

Now it is clear that there is only one basis from which all natural conditions can be attacked as a problem, and it is this:

If the closest attention to a condition of life or nature assures us that such a condition is normal, we must accept it as such, and find a reason for its normality.

Now all social reasoning takes an opposite course, for it begins always by accepting the social condition as the normal one, and the natural condition as something adverse to it, so that whenever it discovers a

natural condition which seems adverse to the social condition it seeks to alter it.

That is, it assumes that a normal condition *should be* abnormal.

It is to this fallacy in reason and observation that we may trace nearly all human disruption where social laws impinge on natural conditions.

Marriage, for instance, is a social institution, but birth, which marriage is supposed to protect, is a natural condition.

We see to-day very plainly that marriage takes precedence of birth, for there is no stigma on a marriage that refuses to produce birth, but there is a stigma on birth that comes naturally to life without marriage.

This, I think, is the basest evidence of social stupidity and wickedness that exists, and no excuse can palliate it.

Again, disease, which is the normal condition of life, we have sought to replace by an abnormal standard of health. See how human courage and dignity have been upset by this perversion of a normal condition.

Again, death, which is the most normal of all conditions, we have chosen to regard as a disaster; as something abnormal and unforeseen, which startles and horrifies us, because we refuse to accept it as a normality.

By the same species of hypocrisy, we have almost shamed normal love out of countenance by calling it sensuality, and have thus tacked on to it those genuine

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sexual abnormalities which are the *result* of this effort to repress and stigmatise a normal function.

When we consider that it is for the belly alone that half the energy of society is exerted; that for this organ man makes wars, and by his money-grubbing for it, puts an intolerable strain on the whole system of existence, what respect can we give to any social valuation he makes of a condition already fixed in value by nature?

So much, then, for the abnormalities that man himself has thrust upon his most normal function, which is to exist in order to produce life.

When we add to them the indifference of Nature itself, or rather, our abnormal social condition exposed to Nature's harshness, and also the normal condition of disease in the germination of life, we see that birth exists under very precarious conditions indeed.

The Ageless One: You have rather piled emphasis on my objection to that precariousness.

The Elder: Well, I will go still further to emphasise the irresponsibility and danger under which intellect appears on earth. To arrive at an extreme understanding of an actuality, we must find first what is its extreme.

We will arrive at this by a supposition.

Suppose, then, that 2500 years ago a great Greek sculptor had lived; a more per-

fect artist than Praxiteles, who is the greatest of the Greeks we know.

We will call our sculptor Predas. He had a gay and amiable nature, and he adored life. Perhaps life also adored him. At least, he did very little work, but at his death, four masterpieces remained, four of the most perfect works ever made on earth; four works so superior to all others, that if they had come down to us, we would have had a new and higher symbol of beauty on earth.

But when barbarism and the darkened mind of Christianity overran the ancient world, destroying so much that was beautiful and creative, the four masterpieces of Predas were destroyed also.

Again, there was a great Greek poet and thinker, whom we will call Tharae. He perhaps before or after the group of writers who knew each other's works, or perhaps he completed a lonely cycle of social life. More probably still, he was accepted like Shakespeare by lesser lights at the common value of acquaintanceship and not accounted great. His works were never transcribed, and the only copies of them were lost by shipwreck, and lost to us for ever.

Do we know the vast intellectual stimulus of but two minds alone, Praxiteles and Plato? Most surely we do, so that it is impossible to consider what intellectual effort would be without them. Our supposition doubles that loss; so that it strikes a blow apparently at the whole moral stabil-

ity of life, and forces us to see it as helpless as a blown leaf, at the mercy of the winds.

Are these suppositions idle? Do not believe it. You have only to see where the intellectual effort was cut short by death, as in the case of Mozart, to recognize by what was done, the promise of what was never done.

Let us add one more supposition to convince us that this cherished structure of earth life, so dear to progressive minds, exists under the most irresponsible conditions.

In order to move the great stones with which antiquity built, they did not, as we vaguely guessed, depend on mere brute labour. Brute force could not erect the Colossus of Rhodes, or carry about blocks of granite weighing 57 tons, and place these in position so perfectly that the joins are hardly apparent. To lift these masses of dead weight they had an ingenious instrument, which by regulating a system of leverage and balance, compensated for the weight it had to lift, so that the heaviest object, once its weight was ascertained, could be moved as easily as a feather, and directed to its place by cranes and tackle. To-day, after many centuries of helplessness, we have achieved a similar result by an expensive and elaborate use of steam or electric power, which cannot do as easily what the little contrivance of antiquity did without much expense of power or wealth.

Now this is a triviality, and hardly worth serious thought, and the fact that it was never recorded is also the evidence that antiquity did not regard it as worth recording. They knew, as we have not yet learned, that intellect has no business to meddle with the concerns of hodmen and millionaires. It is used here only as an instance of that irresponsibility that we are seeking to prove as the normal condition of earth life. May we consider it proved.

The Ageless One: Certainly. We do not need clearer proof of this muddle than the desperate logic that creates a divine mudbler to account for it.

The Elder: Very well, then, if such places as the earth are necessary to produce life; if the problem of life is to produce intellect; if intellect is the highest evidence of human value, and therefore the highest morality, and, finally, if the production of life and intellect exists in a normal state of danger and irresponsibility, then the deduction is inevitable.

It does not matter how life is born, so it *is* born. That is the first essential.

And again it leads to another deduction.

By becoming born, life becomes indestructible.

Already we know by the implanted symbol of a perfection higher than earth life that mind, even on earth, goes beyond earth. The direction of mind is assured. But mind, to take its direction, must first

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be born. Therefore we must assume that such places as the earth are essential to the birth of life and mind.

Let us pause here a moment before confusing life with the common process which produces life.

We see that the mind which expresses life, the Creative mind, is that which leads us to love life. It is the mind which seeks and discovers the emblem of beauty on earth, which makes gaiety, passion, humanity articulate. Its vision translates all that is desirable and important in life into a form by which lesser minds may understand and appreciate.

But this all-embracing passion for life sometimes overruns the boundaries of discretion; this Dionysia carries its votaries to excess. In adoring their mistress, Madame Life, they are apt to lavish a few embraces on that common street drab, Madame Existence.

It is true that all which stirs us to a sense of beauty and humanity on earth makes us love life here. The body of a woman, the voice of a friend, a spring morning, flowers in a garden; any such emblem may stir us to delight. But remember always, it is not life that brings delight to us, it is we who bring delight to life. The emblem of beauty may not always be beautiful; it is our inner vision of beauty that adorns it.

Now let us put aside our love for the symbol of beauty, and consider without

passion what the structure of this earth really is.

Do we wake to a painful acknowledgment of its ugliness? In itself it is primitive, harsh, dangerous, and utterly indifferent to man. Only because it automatically germinates growth is he able to live on it at all. Organisms so low that a little heat and slime bring them into being, exist here. Myriads of animalculæ, vile, crawling things, bulky and shapeless creatures, and those monstrous animal forms of the primal heat and steam—all these are the evidence of nature performing her blind function on earth of germination and growth. Nature forces these creatures into being; accident rules their shapes; necessity continues their existence. To find a spiritual meaning in them is as absurd as to find a spiritual meaning in mud and decayed matter. How the spectacle of these animal organisms, existing and breeding like himself, has troubled the dignity of man! They have forced shame on him as nothing has, for he sees his five treasured senses vilely travestied in them. Worse than all, he sees in man also something lower than these beasts. With them brutality is mechanical and innocent; with man, brutality may be the effect of desire and intention.

But neither the brute in man nor the brute in nature has anything to do with the problem of mind.

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Animal and human, the brute perishes on earth; dying by the process that gave it birth.

One thing only we are concerned with in considering the primitive nature of such places as the earth.

Life, the embryo, *can* be born here.

Therefore, we may assume that elsewhere it cannot be born, and that these very conditions that we object to as a danger to life, brutality, irresponsibility, and the primitiveness of germination are essential to its production. It exists because of them, even if they are its greatest danger.

Now we come to a final deduction.

This element which we call Mind is *needed* elsewhere.

Mind, we are sure, is the highest evidence of morality on earth, therefore we must accept it as the one thing that points to morality beyond earth.

This element, which is expressed by high effort, by striving; this force, this stimulus towards development of mind must be assumed as a needful element to the greater driving force which underlies whatever may be the principle of universal morality, or universal development.

If this is not so, what need to breed intellect on such barren and primitive soil as that on earth?

By this deduction we arrive at the basis from which we set out. Life cannot be born elsewhere than by the primitivism of earth, therefore the conditions of its birth are

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essential and normal, and must be accepted and made the best of. All our peevish complaints at the hardness of existence here are directed against the very process which brings us into being.

Furthermore, this harshness and crudity are of value in helping to develop intellect.

Doubtless, if intellect is born here, and dies even at the moment of birth, it may be developed elsewhere. We must assume that as an inevitable deduction from the conviction of earthly instability and irresponsibility.

Otherwise we would have to believe that the intellectual effort once lost here was lost for ever. But this cannot be even maintained, for it would presuppose that the universal principle of morality existed at the mercy of mere chance.

Now, our supposition of the two great Greek minds, whose works perished before they could reach us, the knowledge that we have of intellect dying before its maturity, and the conviction we have of how much intellect must die without even a single expression of itself, bring us to two final convictions.

The incident of death cannot deflect the direction of life; the accident of earthly destruction cannot destroy its creative effort.

For myself, I do not believe that any high intellectual effort has been lost yet. Lost to us on earth, without doubt, but carried on to a higher development elsewhere.

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Since intellect cannot perish, how can its effort perish, for the effort itself *is* intellect? On earth, all life and substance must exist under the normal law of earthly decay, for both are a part of the substance of earth. Even to preserve what little we have of man's created works we must surround them with infinite precaution, and we know that every one of these emblems of effort will inevitably perish in time.

This fact, more than all spiritual evidence brings us to the conviction of how temporary is the period of earth life, and how completely irresponsible the direction of its affairs.

But just because it *is* so temporary we, who have the good or bad fortune to survive its stress for a period, must make the most of our probation here.

For, first of all, it is a great experience.

The mind that has left earth without this experiment can only know of it by hearsay. It has been debarred from the vital stimulus of terror and pity; it has lost the foil of ugliness; it has foregone the vile necessity of rubbing shoulders with evil itself.

This is our heritage; this, and the symbol of intellect by which we may advance by partial development here to the real problem of development there. Be sure we have not yet even divined where it may reach; all we have divined is the road by which it may be reached, and the vehicle

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by which we travel that road. The vehicle is Birth; the road Intellect.

To sum up, then:

Since the conditions of earth existence are harsh and dangerous, and yet life is born by them, they are essential to the process of birth, because birth cannot be produced elsewhere by better conditions.

Birth is not a question of how we would, but how we must.

By coming to life on earth, mind becomes indestructible, therefore the disorder and irresponsibility of existence cannot destroy it. At the worst it can only deflect its development elsewhere, and deprive it of earthly experience.

Perhaps the worst that can happen to it is man's deliberate refusal to produce life. Perhaps that is also the worst thing that can happen to man. If intellect is the heritage of birth, as the pre-knowledge of the creative mind leads us to believe, then he who possesses mind, and refuses to reproduce it, repudiates the one debt he owes to life. He repudiates the gift that brings him also to life; he commits the final arrogance of saying: "With me, let life perish."

In short, he has killed countless lives of futurity.

The Ageless One: If one may believe this, the responsibility is doubled by being accepted. If the failure to produce and the failure to develop must bring finally that realisation of failure which is the worst

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punishment a mind can suffer, one could wish the direction of life were a little more definite, and not left for realisation when realisation can no longer make amends.

The Elder: Not so; man must be responsible for his own fate. He not only can do as he pleases, he *must* do as he pleases. What virtue in doing what one is told to do? Man is his own enemy; he must be his own captain against himself. Only the Christian demands reward. But there is no giving to life in order to get, for there is no one to give. Man, by his own achievement, creates his own future. Justice here is infallible, for there is no judge to condemn or acquit. Man alone is his own hangman; his own liberator.

OUR MORALITY

WE have done with the universal physical problem, which is to produce life.

Now we come to the individual problem, which is to develop Mind.

By the highest expression of Mind we divine a universal morality.

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But here, as in all efforts to arrive at definitions, we stand amid a confusion of symbols. In order to use words at all, we must first throw all dictionaries to the devil, for a dictionary is only a common agreement to do away with the definition of a thing by defining it.

It is only in helplessness that we use the word morality, for no stringency of phrase can define the element we seek to express by it.

Consciousness is perhaps the mental condition that comes closest to our perception of morality, and by consciousness we mean the deepest perception of self, which by understanding itself reveals its inner vision of life, and by this revelation stimulates consciousness in other minds.

We know that the vast mass of mankind does not arrive at consciousness at all. It is aware only of all that touches its immediate problem of existing, and it automatically rejects all that is not useful to this procedure. It seeks first of all security, comfort, and entertainment, and the effect of these things is to relax consciousness. It is sufficient for these minds that they continue to exist, for that is their prime inter-

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est, just as their prime function is to produce life. Here activity is mistaken for consciousness, but to be most active and resolute in pursuing the affairs of existence is to be least conscious of the problem of intellect, which is consciousness at its highest. Actuality sinks mind, but to arrive at mind one must first sink actuality.

The morality of consciousness is the anti-thesis of all that makes for the social security of the common mind. Its essence is that it is an individual expression of mind, and therefore it goes alone. But because it goes alone it has no right to demand that others should follow.

It is here that all confusion and irritability arise between these two diametrically opposite impulses.

For on the borderland of intellect and the common mind is half-intellect, the mind that is aware of both directions and seeks to reconcile them as one.

It is this half-mind that confuses and muddles all serious issues. It disturbs the people by striving to force consciousness on them, and it strives to deflect consciousness to itself, by announcing its perception of consciousness. By announcing its perception it claims to direct perception, and so we arrive at the exquisite misunderstanding of all connoisseurship, which is that of the egg that claims to lay the hen.

Now all connoisseurship is only the perception of intellect, not the manifestation of intel-

lect. And this perception is the commonest form of articulate human expression.

Because perception, or connoisseurship, arrives by education and by imitation, it must have fixed standards to arrive by, therefore it must seek those standards in the one stable condition of life, which is actuality, and the expression of actuality is in Objective vision.

Now the Creative vision arrives by an exactly opposite process, for, first of all, its effort is one of self revelation, therefore it arrives by an individual standard, not fixed by actuality, but fixed in its own mind. There is no general standard fixed here at all. Therefore there can be no basis of understanding how far the Creative vision achieves its own standard, or fails to achieve it.

So we see here how impossible it is to reconcile these two different impulses; the one which can arrive because its objective is fixed in nature; the one which cannot be known to have arrived, because its standard is a hidden symbol in the mind.

We see the results of both efforts side by side, and since technical achievement in each may even be equal, how are we to differentiate one from the other?

To do this we must throw aside the general acceptance of the intention in both efforts, which we suppose is to create art.

Let us put aside the word Art and substitute for it the word Mind.

Now the value of these efforts will not be their technical ability to create works, but their spiritual ability to reveal Mind.

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Let us throw aside also those irritating labels, Artist, Poet, Musician, Philosopher. They are worn by all sorts of mountebanks and acrobats. Physical agility here is not our problem at all, but mental revelation.

We make this essay with the reservation that much of its deduction must be repudiated, not for lack of understanding, but for lack of flexibility of symbols, which mean different things to different minds.

Added to this difficulty is one of mental equipment.

How can a mind that arrives by its sense of actuality believe that another mind can arrive without actuality?

Only those minds which possess the hidden symbol of intellect know that it exists, therefore one only tells them here something they already know.

Well, then, we have no minds left to appeal to, so our essay must be one of confirmation only.

NOTE.—It may be well to repeat here once again the conclusions which point the direction of our search for intellect.

First, we accept the condition of earthly mind as one of imperfection, since imperfection is the essential stimulus by which we must seek the symbol of perfection.

The division of mind we make is between that which is content with the best of imperfection, and by seeking its emblems in the fixed standard of actuality expresses itself as objective vision, and the mind which goes beyond

actuality in order to define a symbol of perfection already implanted in its mind.

The point of union between these two minds is only that both must use the common emblems of actuality, because these are the common emblems of speech and understanding.

We place objective vision on a lower plane solely because it *can* attain its object, and attainment on earth means cessation of development.

But we accept Creative vision as the highest expression of mind because its objective is unattainable, therefore it exists by a continuous effort of seeking, and therefore is in a continuous state of developing.

And our morality insists that this state of restlessness and searching is intellectual consciousness at its highest.

It is the thing in man that aspires always to go beyond man.

CREATION—REVELATION—EXPOSURE

IF we have agreed that our knowledge of imperfection must posit a sense of perfection, we have agreed to accept the symbol of intellect.

And it is by striving to express the symbol that intellect expresses itself.

Yet there is much valuable expression that exists without the symbol, that finds its perfection already on earth. What is the division between the mind that seeks a symbol and the mind that accepts its emblem?

The first creates from an inner perception of what form should be.

The second *re*-creates from what form is.

Or again:

The one seeks to make.

The other seeks what is made.

Finally:

The one goes beyond earth.

The other remains on earth.

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You may have the very profoundest conviction of which is the more valuable mind. We have become so suspicious of sensation-mongers and thin-air idealists, and all the make-believe refinement of soul and sensuality, that our impulse is to say "To the devil with all heavens. Let us be sure first of solid earth beneath us."

Well, that cry we echo too. But how if the creative mind that goes beyond earth is also the one that expresses the highest sense of earth? How if the non-creative mind could not

have existed if the creative mind had not come first?

At the outset, let us say that we do not seek here valuations in degree of effort, but a valuation of the direction of effort. We are not seeking examples of man's ingenuity, but the perception of intellect that ingenuity expresses. Ingenuity itself is not a very valuable thing. It belongs as much to the thumb as to the mind. Dexterity is the medium only. We seek for all that expresses the highest and most sensitive perception of mind itself.

And this expression manifests itself in three ways.

First, by creating Beauty from its inner perception of Beauty, and from its inner perception of Intellect, creating all that reveals mind.

Secondly, by the deliberate revelation of mind itself in the expression of a supreme egotism which tears egotism to pieces.

Thirdly, by the unconscious revelation of mind that arrives by an exposure of mind. This latter expression may not be creative at all, but it may express what the creative mind also expresses.

In short, by creating mind, by revealing mind, by exposing mind.

All lesser expressions of mind exist by imitation, by learning, and by re-creation from these manifestations of intellect.

While the mind seeks this effort in the valuation of effort, it is oppressed by a strong sense

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not only of difficulty, but of the danger of positive assertion on the problem of morality.

Creative vision, because it is the highest expression of morality, because it is the highest expression the human mind is capable of, is the most difficult vision to define in words; not only because it exists to express a hidden symbol which other minds cannot have, but because on earth its expression is a condition of being, of seeking, of developing. There is no point at which it stops at a final achievement, so that we might say, "Here, then, is at last the standard from which we may judge all other effort."

Let it be stated that there is no such standard; that on earth there never can be such a standard, because imperfection is the essential stimulus by which the symbol of perfection is sought. Therefore, since imperfection is an essential condition, where are we to find a standard in imperfection?

The standard must vary as it recedes from or approaches its hidden symbol, and who can know what that is? Even he who has creative power knows best of all where his effort fails, because he knows what he strove for.

From what basis, then, can we approach this problem of imperfection whose essence consists in that there should be no answer to it?

The best we can do is to posit a statement; not as a positive valuation, but as a means of seeking a valuation.

The highest intellect is that which is able to manifest the deepest perception of itself.

Out of this inner perception of self all that creates, reveals, or exposes is manifested.

It exists by exquisite sensitiveness to all contact with life, whether it expresses this refinement of sense and perception by expressing beauty, passion, high thought, or the individual consciousness of its own emotions, acts and thoughts.

Now we perceive the rarity of this sensitiveness not only in the rarity of its expression on earth, but by the profuse evidence of a lack of it in that diametrically opposite mind, which we may call the social mind, for this consists in sharing a common agreement on all matters. It even makes common property of its passions, and puts them in the public stock, in order to be sure of saving a little for its own use.

Now, again, all lesser vision, all objective vision, exists also by a common standard and agreement. Its standard is fixed by the condition of actuality through which it expresses itself. It has but to hold the glass up to nature to triumphantly refute all denial of it as the right and only standard of value.

And since we already state that our effort to seek a moral value in intellect is by the manifestation of its imperfection, we have ranged against us the social mind, which embraces nearly all mankind, and the objective mind, which is the elder brother of the social mind, then, again, what mind is left over for us to appeal to?

We must be content to advance our effort at valuation in order that it may be denied, or better still, not listened to.

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We have seen the basis from which all expression of vision and intellect springs, and that is the structure of existence on earth; the destiny of man in a material and visible world.

This material of expression is before our eyes, under our hands. We can examine it, handle it, turn it inside out, learn it and relearn it till there is a danger of becoming weary of it.

This material is common stock. It is there for any who have eyes to see it, ears to hear it, a mind to analyse it, and hands or voice to express it.

Things seen and heard. Out of these we must create.

To the artist it throws a mass of colour and form, crude or beautiful as it is affected by light and atmosphere, or as its shapes fall into harmony of line or mass, tone or colour.

To the musician it offers perception of beauty or emotion by the analysis of sound and rhythm.

To the poet it offers the perception of beauty or emotion by the analysis of words.

To the thinker it offers the complexities of mind itself, the problem of man and nature, of spirit and brute; in short, the conscious analysis of thought.

But, first of all, it offers only the material for these expressions of vision. This material is not in itself creative; it is a thing already created.

Sound, form, man himself—these things are not expression, but the means of expression.

Therefore, to let expression rest at a statement of something that already exists is but to make a replica of what exists.

And this, surely, cannot be a great accomplishment. Difficult it may be, for it requires dexterity and craftsmanship. But he cannot be said to create who does no more than copy a thing which is already made.

But see what a difficulty we arrive at in striving to separate the value of expression from the value of the thing expressed.

Why, this thing which is expressed may be our own life, and what can be more valuable to us than that. This common material of art is the common material of our own existence. All that we see, feel, and hear; all that stirs us to a sudden remembrance and emotion; all this we must love to see in recreated form.

Objective art, which may be the emblem of so much that we love, has already destroyed our power to value it coolly. A sentiment has captured our affection and interest; we are bought over as partisans before the case is tried.

Well, we must throw aside first the thing which we first seek to protect: our sense of entertainment. We must throw away a piece of our heart. It is a difficult sacrifice, for not only our sentiment is involved, but our egotism too.

“What!” we cry, “this picture recalls to me a sense of something I have seen; something that charmed my eyes; this story brings back to me an episode of my youth. Here is an expression of life that I could almost believe to

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be my own ; here is a writer that makes me laugh and weep ; here, while I lingered over this book, this picture, I have forgotten myself. I have been happy, content, entertained.”

Well, then, is *this* the mission of intellect, this emotion which you may buy by going to the theatre ?

Is it the highest value of a piece of work that you should forget yourself ?

Does the mere recollection of an event or a scene stir you to a deep sense of yourself ?

Is not this sensation of pleasure and contentment rather a narcotic ?

Does not the sensation of this recreated piece of life merely reassure your sense of also being alive ?

We must ask other questions also.

Is it not the mission of intellect that you should realise yourself ?

And is realisation a means of contentment ? Does not the revelation of your own mind rather startle and perturb you ?

Does not a light thrown suddenly on the problem of man’s destiny, *your* destiny, give you an uneasy feeling ?

Is it not your impulse to reject all that stirs you too deeply, because to be deeply stirred one must call into being a strong effort of intellect, and does not this effort tire you ?

In short, is not the thing you seek in life and art an avoidance of this problem ; a little cheerfulness and entertainment in order to forget it ?

Do you, then, posit self-forgetfulness as the desirable state, or self-realisation ?

The revelation of all high intellect requires effort to understand and appreciate it. It requires the highest effort you are able to make, and this tires, and, furthermore, forces the stress of self knowledge on yourself.

But in return for this effort and uneasiness, is not the stimulus that comes by revelation of mind something more important to you?

It may hardly make us happy to be dragged face to face with ourselves, to be forced to realise where we have failed, where we have been stupid, where we have given up effort; but we cannot be said to be intellectually alive unless we are so made aware of ourselves.

And Creative art, which reveals its own vision of the passion, beauty, and pain of life, forces the realisation of these things on us. It drags us out of all inertia of mind, of all Nirvana of entertainment.

Now is it not true that nearly all that pleases you in Art is that which first entertains by being easily understood, and, secondly, flatters your sense of being alive by recalling to you a sense of actuality.

‘‘Yes, but the little problem of our own lives must engross us,’’ you cry.

That is true; but first ask yourself what it is that engrosses you.

A series of events and emotions that happened in a certain way. This is your life.

Well, but these events and emotions might have happened any way. They are at the direction of chance. You have seen this or that thing because you happened to be on the spot; you did

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this or that thing because this or that circumstance happened.

Surely a procedure so haphazard cannot be very important after all!

But the thing that is important, the thing that you carry with you on whatever road chance sends you, is your mind, and this is not made up of the emotions and events that spring from accident, but of the universal passions and thoughts implanted in it.

The mind may be disturbed by the action of events and emotion; it cannot be altered by them.

It is an intrinsic element; the one stable property you possess.

Therefore your life is lived in the mind, not in the actions of your body. Therefore, again, the work of art that recalls a sentiment of actuality or personal emotion to you is concerned with the casual episode of your existence, not with the eternal element of your mind.

The universal problem of morality to you is not what happened to you, but *what you are*.

Finally, when your interest in a work of art is aroused, ask yourself whence it springs; for there can be only two issues involved.

One is the sense of flattery and entertainment that causes you to forget your mind by recalling to you the episode of your existence.

The other is that which forces you to realise yourself by recalling to you the eternal elements of your mind.

All objective vision is that which entertains by recalling the actuality of existence.

CREATION—REVELATION—EXPOSURE.

All creative vision is that which reveals the universal problem of mind, of which your mind is an element.

Here we arrive at a difficulty which attends both the problems of creative and objective vision, and that is the taste by which each is recorded.

By so many years of learning and analysis of all that expresses the visible aspects of life we have found much that we discard, and a little that we select.

This hard-earned refinement of perception is dear to us. It teaches us to select from this picture what we know as charm, harmony, and grace of execution. Here also is a poem which is the evidence of a mastery in the use of words. What it has selected to express it expresses with a complete understanding of its medium. Its form is perfect.

Both these expressions justify our taste. We do not give our verdict lightly. It is the effect of long and cautious analysis of the problem of either expression.

Yet both of these forms of art may conform to every canon of taste without bringing to it the revelation of mind, either your own or that of the poet or artist.

It is clear that all expression that depends on its capacity to reveal taste without revealing spirit is that which exists by perception of the problem of intellect, without revealing intellect itself.

In short, it gives you no more than you can give it.

Now this exchange in kind, this giving and taking quality, is that which comes closest to the perception of creative power. For a creative mind may even have this anomaly: it may even force revelation by repudiation. We see this in the aesthetic rejection of Rubens. We know what is rejected here: a sense of the vital Dionysia of life itself, a spirit too strong for weak stomachs.

Lesser expressions of vision can never stir passion either to acclaim or reject them. There is much aesthetic judgment that rejects Titian and accepts Giorgione. The stronger spirit has forced upon a weak emotion its own valetudinarianism, but the lesser expression soothes; it demands no stronger emotion than that of taste.

It is because all lesser vision exists by a modulated expression that it appeals most easily to those minds which require their taste vindicated first. For taste, decoration, aesthetic refinements are a defence against all that is too vital in the expression of vision. This refinement does not wish to bring tragedy and lyric exaltation into the drawing room, because it has no sense of them in life.

This is where we must be most cautious in accepting these canons of mind that are most aware of the canons of expression. Nearly all this refinement springs from a lack of vitality. It is perception without passion. It knows by hearsay, but never by experience.

How should it? The real experience of life is given to few. A sensation cannot be recorded unless the sense is there to record it; a thought cannot enter a mind unless the mind is

able to receive the thought. Therefore creative vision can only carry its message to those who are able to record a sense of its message; the instrument that records sound must be in tune with the musician's power to record emotion.

REMBRANDT—VELASQUEZ.—To come from a generalised statement to a particular instance of the distinction between creative and objective vision is hardly a pleasing duty.

If the instance is worth making, it must be made from the highest evidence of both visions, for all minor expressions do not count, because they are only imitative.

But much objective vision is not imitative. It may spring from a very high individual outlook on life. To our earthly perception, it may even carry a stronger sense of life than creative vision, because it lives by a stronger sense of actuality.

If our conviction rested at a belief that earthly life was an end in itself, we would perhaps say that the highest objective vision was the highest evidence of intellect, for it seeks, and finds, a perfection in the visible structure of life.

But our conviction does not rest here. It believes that there is an element of human consciousness that can go beyond the best that earth can offer; a perception that is aware of something much finer and more delicate than that which its eyes rest on, and it is the evidence of this perception that we seek to analyse.

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The problem that Velasquez set himself to solve was first the analysis of tone. He concentrated his attention on the difficult matter of surfaces and edges. To this he brought a very delicate perception of textures and harmonious colour. Pigment, laid on a flat surface, could hardly present a more satisfactory result to the eye, and moreover this master's knowledge of the awkward medium of oils has never been surpassed. In such paintings as *Las Meninas* the problem of atmospheric perspective has been added to that of tone and harmony, and the result is a triumph of analysed observation.

This master is seldom at fault in selecting the paintable qualities of any surface his eye rests on. We recall the procession of his canvases; a series of faces—grave, detached, passive, static in the act of being painted.

We know that these faces and forms presented Velasquez with a problem of surfaces and textures which his eye and hand translated with astonishing taste and certainty into refined replicas of their objective.

Our eye, too, is charmed; our taste responds to this exploit in taste; our admiration records its dexterity.

But here we stop. Our mind records no other sensation. Again, what is the exact nature of this master's achievement?

He has taken an object and placed it on canvas with the closest attention to its actuality. As the light falls, so it is painted. As the sitter is, so he is reflected. This mirror has flattened certain details, concentrated on others; but still,

it is a mirror which reflects an object placed before it.

These faces it reflects are grave, dignified, passive, reserved. Yes, but where is the sitter's mind, where is the artist's mind behind these qualities which negative the revelation of mind? We do not know; we shall never know. The artist has left us a mask of his mind, as he left us the masks of his sitters' faces. We know the lace on their collars better than we know their souls. The texture of a beautiful piece of lace itself might bring us to the same degree of emotion. It is a surface we admire, but all approach by a profounder analysis leaves us cold.

Rembrandt, too, is a painter of portraits. But here we do not only pass in review the faces of citizens, soldiers, old women, Jews, girls—we pass instead personalities unique and distinct from one another. Before we come to the problem of paint at all, we feel a sympathy for the larger human problem of mind. This painter does not only know how a sitter looks; he knows why he looks so. He does not see only the design of the sitter's face, he sees also the design of the sitter's mind.

But this is the least of his revelation. He has a higher problem before him than the divination of character, or the actuality of his sitter's presence. These exterior aspects are absorbed by an interior vision of them, which is an essence of the painter's own mind.

He has placed these heads in a mysterious light and penumbra; an element of beauty altogether detached from actuality. It is not paint

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he is expressing here at all. We forget the medium. To examine its handling leaves us only astonished. There is no hint of the method of arrival, because method has been submerged in expression. We do not believe for a moment that a few coloured earths and dyes laid on a flat surface have caused these heads to live in a depth of strange tone, and we know that no light from an ordinary window fell on their faces.

Nor did it. The light came from a window in Rembrandt's mind. Paint here is only the accident of medium. It is the means, not the end. A thing is not found here to paint, a thing is sought by paint.

Our humanity may pause at the face painted, divining whether its owner was kindly, crafty, mean or brave. The mind of the painter has divined this lesser problem for us at a glance, but the profounder impulse of his own mind seeks a higher problem to express. Perfectly as he understands the actuality before him, he uses it only to transcribe by it his inner vision. The picture itself comes from something previously conceived; an element of beauty made of light, shadow, and the texture of surface that lies between the actual surface and the painter's vision of it.

Now what is the real distinction between these two masters? Perhaps the effort at distinction made here will not be apparent to other minds. The verdict of painters since Velasquez and Rembrandt has gone to Velasquez. There is a reason for this. Velasquez may not have told us anything of his mind, but he certainly

left us a clear analysis of his use of paint. His methods can be applied. To study him is a liberal education in technique. With a like dexterity of hand and eye, his achievement may be equalled.

But what can we take from the other master? His paint baffles us. We cannot be sure by what stages the pigment arrived at this surface which reflects light, and which absorbs light. An equal light plays over the whole canvas, yet it lives on in its own light and shadow, a mysterious depth that we cannot penetrate, because we cannot step into the painter's own mind.

Aesthetically, you may still find more charm to the eye in the reserved tone and colour of a Velasquez canvas. It may please you most because no other stress is laid upon your mind than that of charm. It may please you because there was no other stress of mind in the painter's translation of his vision.

You can measure this accomplishment by the standard of your taste, and by the standard of actuality.

But what standard have you to measure the other achievement? Actuality can give you no fixed point, for actuality is discarded. We do not know if Rembrandt succeeded, because we do not know how far the result fell short of the intention.

What we do perceive is that while Velasquez remained content with the immediate problem before him, Rembrandt has passed the immediate problem and gone beyond it.

While one mind negatives emotion, the other reveals emotion. While one mind is static,

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calm, hidden, the other is restless, seeking, striving for the utmost expression of itself.

Now, there is a final distinction between these minds, which you may call supposition, and therefore discard. But since we believe all intellect to be the effect of inherited intellect, it must be stated.

What quality of mind can these two minds bequeath by blood to posterity?

If Velasquez's achievement of taste and dexterity comes to life in another generation, might it not just as likely turn its effort to designing carpets or to writing refined novels? Its technical dexterity, its taste, and its sense of actuality are the qualities needed for such achievements. If it turned to the medium of words, what revelation of passion and mind could it leave us. However delicately it wrote, however refined its style, what exposure could it make of its own mind, its own desires, its own secrets?

But we know that if Rembrandt had bequeathed his heritage of vision, and that vision had taken to the medium of words, it would have revealed the inner nature of mind and passion, as its genesis revealed these elements in paint. And that vision of beauty which Rembrandt sought in light might translate itself anew into high poetry, for this takes inspiration from light and spirit also.

This must be our conclusion. Velasquez does not reveal mind, because his own mind did not perceive the problem of revelation. It goes no higher than the perception of actuality because it was satisfied with actuality. Therefore it was satisfied with the best that earth could

give it, and could divine no higher state of perfection.

But Rembrandt discarded actuality and sought for something better than earth could offer. He was aware of its imperfection, and to be so aware, is to seek an emblem, not on earth, but in the mind itself.

Then does not this mind indicate a sense of perfection that goes already beyond earth.

Again, let us disclaim any courtesy in making these distinctions. They do not deprecate Velasquez' achievement, but they place it on the lower level of objective vision. On this plane it is the highest of its order. By placing it beside another great objective vision, Franz Hals, we see that if it is a little less human, its taste and charm are higher, and all lesser vision must take its place by its power to use a medium, for here the outlook is equal, since all start from the level of a common use of actuality.

To perceive in actuality the human problem is the *beginning* of the intellectual problem, for a sense of humanity comes closest to a perception of mind.

We see that Reynolds reveals a larger humanity in himself by perceiving the human problems of others, but the symbol of an individual revelation of mind was not deeply sought. And this we suspect is because this very profound expression of beauty failed also to express passion.

But in such minds as Van Dyke or Gainsborough, there is hardly an indication of even

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the human problem. Never was life presented more statically, more remotely. It is a mystery to understand that expression can go so far, and express nothing. There is not a hint of the mind that expresses, or the minds expressed. Velasquez at least leaves us the impression of a national gravity, in these masked faces of a dull court; Van Dyke, in his portrait of Charles I., is stirred for a moment to consciousness by the mind before him, but for the rest, a lay figure might call as much passion into being.

It is here that we are presented with the most exasperating difficulty in separating mind from expression.

Undoubtedly all great creative vision has style. Its power of expression alone finds a medium. The distinction here from lesser vision is that mind does not find a method in order to express itself. Thought is style, for once the mind has defined thought, its form is made by the act of definition.

To express trivialities gracefully, in the manner of Wilde, or Whistler, or Stevenson, has nothing to do with style, for not one of these minds has a profundity to express, so that none arrived naturally at a means of expression. They found it necessary to make a style, in order to have something to say.

SAIREY GAMP—FALSTAFF.—Let us take another example of this difficult distinction between two visions, both apparently intent on a figment of actuality.

Sairey Gamp we know to be a life-size figure portrait. She is even more than that, for we can walk all round her, and view her from every aspect. Moreover, we can see her in movement. Every detail of this old woman is drawn with Dutch minuteness. We know each feature of her face, every fold of her clothes, every nod and wink and gesture of her wheedling manner. Her vocabulary, her accent, what she eats and drinks, even how she smells—all are as clear as if she were in the room with us; clearer, perhaps, for here a masterly observer has usurped our vision, and shown us more than we might discover for ourselves.

Moreover, this is no mere cataloguer that is at work here, but a vision so acute that every detail noted is an essential one, and a mind so vivacious that each is presented with such a lively and certain power of definition that we have nothing to do but sit back enchanted at this exquisite comedy of life and character.

Indeed, we are so entertained, and so completely possessed by the success of this exploit in vision, that it is with a shock that we realise its essential failure.

We know everything about this old woman but what she thinks.

We know what she says, truly; but words are not always the revelation of mind. We must know something more than the wheedling tricks of speech by which a disreputable old woman makes her living. We want to know what she would say and do in the presence of a genuine emotion; we want to know if she is capable of some greater mastery of idea than

snuff and gin. Perhaps you will say the understanding is that she is incapable of a genuine emotion, and the intention is only to present her as she is in actuality. Then the intention has succeeded, but the failure in revelation is apparent, for if she is incapable of a genuine emotion she has nothing to reveal, and remains, therefore, only a human exterior, which we might see for ourselves at any time by walking down a back street.

In order to create something more than this is needed. Something that perhaps three or four words can supply, but to lack which is to lack the divine essence of revelation.

The eyesight that presents Falstaff to us arrives by the same method as that which sees Sairey Gamp. The visibility of this fat old man is perfect. What he fails to tell us about himself, other characters tell us about him. We know his tricks of intonation and speech better than our own. It is a phenomenal exploit in conveying a sense of the duration of time alone, the picture of this old man, for in the space of a few short scenes we seem to have lived a lifetime with him. It is useless to repeat the visible essence of Falstaff, for those who love him know him more intimately than their own father. But the essence of this revelation has least to do with its visible aspect. The magic curtain of the mind is drawn aside; we see the very springs of its being at work, and we know that this fat man is at the mercy of a master passion, the nemesis of all grossness, which is the terror of death. It is ever present; starting out at any relapse from activity; stalking with him in the

night betwixt tavern and tavern. His mock talk of repentance is uttered with a genuine shiver, which is the very stimulus that drives him afresh to roaring and drinking. This is the real revelation of mind that makes Falstaff a created character, and Sairey Gamp a re-created fact.

DORA COPPERFIELD — OPHELIA.

Here is a dual situation—the death of two young girls. In that of Dora, what is it that concerns the author? Solely that a young life is dying. He is obsessed with pity for an elemental physical fact. His tears and cries are at its visible spectacle. We are dragged perforce to see this young figure waste away, to feel the lightness of its body as vitality leaves it, to listen to its pretty child's talk with those who soothe its departure. But not a word, not a thought escapes from this wax doll to show the mind within; not a dream or a desire by which we might divine the emotion under which it lived.

But Ophelia? Is the mind here concerned with the fact of death? Not at all. Death is the casual episode. It is used as a dramatic emphasis by which the poet discloses for us the secret heart of a young girl. The stress of circumstance has torn conventional coverings from the mind. Furtiveness, caution, sexual secrecy, all the restraints that are forced on the young marriageable girl, are gone. Instead, dreams of a lover; the little licentious thoughts of desire; the physical emotion of unexploited sex:

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all this madness discloses as ruthlessly as the babble of a young girl under an anaesthetic.

There is no mystery or revelation in the fact of death, any more than in the fact of eating. Its revelation must consist in showing how the dying mind lived. From any aspect, death has no meaning unless it throws a light on life. It is a body that perishes, a clockwork that runs down, and to present this physical failure as a spectacle affords as much revelation as to present it only in action. However ingeniously your clockwork figure moves; however clearly you distinguish its character from other clockworks, your effort cannot be creative, but only a feat of observation.

It is neither in malice nor injustice that Dickens is compared with Shakespeare.

No writer saw the objective spectacle of life so minutely or vivaciously as Dickens. He has given us a gallery of portraits as actual as the people we see about us. He has observed for us every idiosyncracy of character and gesture that human beings may express. But in all this marvellous collection of faces, there is not a single revelation of mind. The passions here exist as social formulas. Tragedy is to break a rule of conduct, or make a mistake in affairs.

It is baffling to come so freshly to a sense of life, and yet miss the one essential that makes for a creative vision of life. Our humanity may be stirred; our entertainment complete; our sense of the spectacle of life about us vastly stimulated, but of anything that startles us by a revelation of mind or passion there is not a spark.

And we see at last the nature of this failure. It has failed to perceive that drama does not make mind, but mind that makes drama.

Richard Carstone wastes away and dies because a law suit fails to succeed. The emphasis is not on the man, but on the law suit. We are led to assume that an accident of affairs can make an element of mind. But here the element of mind is completely overlooked. The author has gold at his feet, but he disregards it in order to dig for copper. In short, he kills Richard Carstone in order to kick Chancery practice.

The instance is typical, and the basis of this gigantic failure is morality. In order to become a good man, Dickens becomes a bad artist. Where he might have raised us to the spectacle of human mind, he lowers us in the mud of human affairs, and it is the crowning ignominy of this most lovable writer that he earns the approbation of a biographer like Chesterton.

A comparison of Dickens with Balzac is avoided, because Balzac is creative; so that perhaps his perception of the human problem of mind comes closest to Shakespeare's, but not close enough to be of an equality. The later effort lacks restraint. It runs by a species of violence beyond its objective, which is mind, and too often arrives only at actuality, by finding actuality the cause of the human problem, instead of being only its effect. Balzac is too much of a partisan, too deeply concerned with life to stand apart from it. He combines the man of action and the thinker in one, and this heat of movement disturbs his judgment. But in spite of over-statement and over-emphasis, he does

startle and absorb our attention, and force upon us the revelation of universal passion; and so he must rank as one of the great creative minds.

It is well to be cautious here in again recalling the understanding that to perceive the problem of mind is not to manifest the creative effort. Critical insight has long perceived the nature of Shakespeare's achievement, and the psychological novel is the effect of this discovery by imitation. But no human effort at revelation has gone quite so far from its objective as this. By setting out deliberately to reveal mind, it has arrived only at revealing its immediate vision of actuality. How could this be otherwise, for all objective vision has nothing but actuality to reveal. Besides, it has presumed that whatever is observed of human action and mentality must reveal mind, whereas it may reveal no more than a little animal organism with no element of mind in it whatever.

In short, it arrives at life by photography and diagrams of passion.

By this road we get an exhaustive analysis of a servant girl's mental anatomy, or those tender profundities concerned with the affairs of peasants and work-people, an industry that might as soon arrive at an understanding of mind by studying the affairs of ants.

All national expressions of mind are hardly more than aestheticised peasantry.

Furthermore, this forced and calculated effort to reveal mind by realistic formula has thrown aside the one great virtue that objective vision may possess, and that is the warmth and passion by which it is expressed.

Though Dickens is hardly aware of the problem of mind, one would never make the mistake of comparing him with Flaubert, whose only concern is to reveal his perception of the common mentality.

By the strength of his own individual vision of actuality, Dickens comes very close indeed to creative revelation. If his sincerity fails at the serious problems of passion, his gusto and love for the spectacle of life reveal a great deal of his own heart. If his taste goes astray in expressing humanity by sentimental cries, his love for humanity is transcendent. Here he does really stir perception and consciousness, if we are willing to be deceived by the writer's own emotion; but, unfortunately, we discover too soon that all this passion has quite overlooked its human problem and is wholly concerned with its indignation at society.

But with all its false quantities and evasions, this is objective vision at its best; for the author is not ashamed of his emotion, and knows how to appeal to ours. If humanity on earth were an end in itself, Dickens might have been its greatest revealer.

But Flaubert not only disavows any sentiment for humanity; he is terribly concerned for fear we should discover his own. This he hides from us like something obscene. The intention here is calculated, because he knows that creative revelation, as in Shakespeare, goes beyond mere personal revelation.

But by hiding himself, Flaubert did away with his one possibility of revealing himself, for he failed to observe that personal revelation is

that which comes closest to creative revelation.

Madame Bovary is wholly the effect of a critical perception of the problem of intellect. It is pure connoisseurship, without a spark of creative passion, or a glint that reveals mind. It is an icy and precious analysis of an immediate and local problem, which is merely that of the effect of a little cheap education on a little cheap female creature.

What revelation of mind can such a problem bring us. It has not even the basis of a universal humanity; since it springs from the social structure of the decade.

Yet this work is so typical of that objective vision which holds the glass up to actuality as its triumphant assertion of virtue that we use it as the final example of what creative power is *not*.

One would like to keep rudeness out of an effort to discuss the morality of intellect, but surely no objective dictum deserves more contempt than that which assumes that circumstance or accident can effect an intrinsic element of mind. Mind may be displayed under the stress of circumstance, but no circumstance can affect its structure. To assume otherwise is to assume that the accident of a knife makes a murderer, or the accident of seduction a prostitute. In short, it is to assume that events make man, instead of man that makes events.

But this fallacy is so deeply rooted in the earthly mind that nearly all its social activity is directed at the effect of action, and hardly ever at the cause of action.

It believes that facts control life, not that life controls facts.

But it is useless to fall foul of this failure in consciousness, for how can objective vision repudiate the law by which it lives? It might as reasonably repudiate the food by which it lives. Therefore, again, there is no intention here of depreciating objective vision, but of revaluing it.

In bringing any lesser vision to compare with the creative consciousness of a mind like Shakespeare's, it must be with the reservation that comparison is really out of the question.

For Shakespeare is an enigma, inasmuch as there is no other mind that can be compared to his.

The realisation of this isolation of mind may startle and depress, but at least within the metier of words, its profundity is apparent.

The revelation of this mind is by intention. It arrives at revelation by the highest consciousness of the problem of mind, and of the problem of passion. And this expression is reached by a perfect command of form, by which it achieves also the highest perception of beauty.

If no other intellect had survived, mankind might arrive at the perception of intellect by this revelation. If no other creator of beauty had given us his vision, mankind might arrive at a sense of beauty by this poet of its essence.

We are able a little to perceive the astonishing nature of this single achievement by man's uncertain acceptance of it. From every aspect, perceptivity has arrived at the spectacle of this

mind, and striven to express perceptivity by it. But whether it adores, or whether it repudiates, it still remains mystified.

Even we, who love this mind, hesitate; for may not our love be only self love—the emotion that stirs us to a high perception of ourselves?

Perhaps we find our conviction of its greatness best expressed by those who repudiate it, for we see that the distinction between this one mind and all other minds is so great that it produces scepticism.

It is here we understand the repudiation of Bernard Shaw and other good aldermen.

“What!” they cry. “This mind unique? This one mind higher and rarer than all other minds? Such a statement is absurd, because it is incredible. We refuse to credit it because we cannot credit it. This blasphemy seeks to annihilate all democratic egotism, which we count holy. To accept this, we must deny ourselves. What an absurdity!”

By such scepticism, we go off about our county council affairs with a light heart. Indeed, here, as elsewhere, repudiation of all high morality is self-preservative, the impulse by which little egoisms arrive at a sense of self-importance, which is the first social virtue.

Yet for all this assumed indifference, a shiver of uneasiness remains. Materialistic and progressive minds may truly deny this supreme expression of consciousness, for they arrive at what consciousness they possess by other roads. They may not be aware of the cause, but they are aware of its effect. They know that there radiates from this mind the stimulus of almost

a universal consciousness—at least wherever the problem of intellect is perceived. Each generation of mind arrives at it to be startled into question, doubt, love of beauty, and a perception of self. And each mind that understands and loves this achievement, comes by its adoration almost to despair.

“I see the greatness of this mind so clearly that if I am right, there is no other mind to compare with it. Then surely I cannot be right!”

Well, let us be frank at last, and acclaim what we have long known. There is no other creative vision by means of speech that can be compared with that of Shakespeare.

But we cannot measure the nature of this achievement of mind because it is its own sole standard of achievement.

If we understand this, we begin to understand something of that “pathos of distance”—that vast gulf that lies between high consciousness and low consciousness that, even on earth, puts two thousand years of development between two minds dwelling side by side to-day.

We are aware of how hollow and sterile these affirmations sound to the materialistic mind, for it reasons from a basis of utility, and to be useful on earth one need not even be aware of the problem of consciousness at all. Where do we apply it? they cry. It is an element so remote, so isolated from the affairs of life, that only under the sudden stress of pain or fear is humanity even made dimly aware of it.

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But there need be no concern here. Perceptivity of consciousness alone begins its moral responsibility. Where it is not perceived, its effort is not demanded. Its very remoteness from the common business of existing is its essence, for it is the final test on earth of human value, and if it was common property, it could have no value. It is buried deepest so that only the strongest effort may survive the search for it. Its paradox is that its highest perception brings the highest conviction of failure. Success is only possible where the end of achievement is in sight from the beginning, as in the objective vision, that sees the visible problem of achievement before it sets out to achieve.

But where consciousness of the moral problem of development is supreme, it must live by the conviction of its imperfection on earth, for the symbol of perfection it strives for is already beyond earth; and it lives by striving, not by attaining. That its attainment on earth may outstrip all objective success gives us no key to where it failed.

Therefore, by the road of such a mind as Shakespeare's, a mind that comprehends in one effort all that is diffuse in the Greek consciousness of passion and beauty, we arrive at the real enigma of intellect in a supreme example. If this mind stops short at the consciousness of its own limitations what high value can you find in that expression which has its limitations already set in actuality, and by them arrives at success?

It is because of the depth and rarity of creative vision, and because of its essential condi-

tion of existing to express a hidden symbol, that we on earth can only rarely affirm our conviction of its individual expression.

Our definition of morality as supreme consciousness of mind is only an effort at definition. It is the best we can find, but its incompleteness is forced upon us by the feebleness, the restrictions, and the inflexibility of human speech.

Therefore we can only affirm our sense of the creative power where its consciousness of life arouses in us the highest perception of consciousness in life.

Here, with Shakespeare, we arrive at Beethoven, for in his own medium of expression Beethoven is also his own sole standard of achievement.

BEETHOVEN.

Here the conscious problem of intellect, of man at war with destiny, is also combined with the highest perception of passion and beauty. Here, the same essence of form is expressed by sound that Shakespeare expressed by words.

It is on this point of an essence in form and beauty that we are able to perceive a collective expression in creative vision.

By beauty we arrive at the highest consciousness, because we arrive at the highest exaltation by it.

For a long time, one must confess, it was a difficulty to understand just why beauty should be the extreme expression of consciousness itself. By no roads can the human mind arrive at defining the nature of beauty, though its conviction of beauty is absolute.

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The nearest we can come to a definition of beauty would seem to be this:

It goes beyond the stimulus of terror and pity.

It goes even beyond the process by which consciousness is first stimulated. It arrives without the whip, for it no longer needs the emphasis of pain in order to realise joy.

Do not confuse creative exaltation with the emotion we call happiness on earth, for this is only forgetfulness, and exists by a temporary release from nervous pressure. We find its mental expression in all that soothes and pacifies, as in the art of Watteau or Herrick.

But exaltation arrives by an element extreme from this passivity of mind. It arrives by the very stimulus it disdains most, which is suffering. We see an example of the highest exaltation in Beethoven's Ode to Joy, which he created from the abyss of his own pain and despair.

It is just where conviction of the spiritual failure of earthly life and mind is driven most terribly on the creative spirit that it rises to its supreme effort and throws back its defiance of exaltation at the mean physical destiny that causes it to suffer.

High physical sensitiveness and high spiritual perception bring their own tragedy to the creative mind on earth.

And the immature mind; the complacent earthly organism looks on at the creative despair with astonishment and even derision. How can it understand this emotion of which it is the cause? How can it be aware of the dream that craves a release from the eternal spectacle of

its dullness, its complacence, its poor spirit? To itself, these are the very essence of its comfort. It could not conceive a finer existence than that which gives it food, fornication and amusement; a society that it understands and which understands it, and a world that gives it companions by the million. It is never alone, this mind, and all its dreams can be realised. Actuality is its priest and pander; its assurance of being alive, and its assurance of the things it lives for. It needs no other stimulus, and deserves no higher perfection; and if it could live by the gratification of its senses for a million years, it would have no higher dream of heaven.

A malicious thought suggests that perhaps it deserves no higher heaven.

But all creative exaltation does not derive by pain the stimulus of joy. We know of one mind at least that has given us a complete statement of the Dionysian ecstasy that repudiates suffering.

RUBENS AND MICHAEL ANGELO.

Rubens is the master of all that is strong and gay, of the courage that has done with timidity and convention.

The little personal melancholies, by which sad minds exist, like maggots in cheese, have been swept aside. All that is morbid, self-centred, concerned only with its contact and recoil from life, no longer exists for us. In the great sweep of these compositions, we feel that life ascends, like a strong bird in flight, and that its expression is so powerful that only the medium of paint and canvas cramps it.

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Before this pageant, where all forms are noble, all textures rich and splendid, and where only the elect dwell, we are carried beyond the mean desire for subterfuge, for narcotics, for the half measures by which we avoid a courageous affirmation of life.

The ease and splendour of this achievement is only half its glory. Its higher significance is that it is the expression of a free spirit.

Dull minds have made a strange confusion with this mind and an element they conceive in it of earthliness. It is so fecund, so overflowing with the frankness of nudity, so full of the gusto of living, and so indifferent to the little suppressions that are mistaken for refinement, that it forces on all etiolated minds too strong a sense of life. In self-defence, they utter cries of pained aestheticism to disguise what is a genuine impulse of shame—the shame of the eunuch.

In reality, this mind, which has glorified earth most, has *least* of earth in it.

Those who find courage, gaiety, exaltation, the spirit of earth, have strangely mistaken their direction.

The spirit of earth is one of care, of physical anxiety, of nervous depression and fear of the unknown.

It is expressed most by those minds which are called spiritual on earth, those which run to sentimentalities, thin-air ideality, prettiness and tenderness, in order to escape their dread and consciousness of earth, and in order also to disguise the little sensualities of earth, which they desire, and are ashamed of.

Artists on earth make a sad effort to capture appreciation, but they might be wiser to seek first the spirit of depreciation.

Appreciation is the expression of an equality of perception, at least. It need not be sought, for it is there already. But the individual expression of vision that stirs anger and protest has stirred first of all an impulse of self-defence, and we have only to see what it defends in order to understand the virtue of what it attacks.

Rubens could dispense with our love and appreciation, but the outeries of Puritanism and Aestheticism—for both exist by the same starved emotion, are a valuation he could not afford to lose.

So we come to the most charming evidence of misdirected zeal in observing that all which seeks to depreciate a great and free expression of mind is that which most certainly puts an affirmation of value on it.

We may also see the success of Rubens' achievement in expression by perceiving where another effort failed.

Michael Angelo has left us a vast expression of industry, and the record of an indomitable persistence, but what is the exact revelation of mind in all this mass of labour?

We have the sense of a tortured spirit at work, of a vast upheaval of forms, of a titanic unhappiness, of a perception of the intellectual problem existing in a veritable agony. But for a definite statement of beauty or passion we look in vain, and in the end we see that there is incoherency here, because the mind is unable to

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express either its vision of life, or its individual revelation of self.

It has stopped at the point of all half intellect, which is perception of the problem of intellect without the power to create from its perception. Self obtrudes, yet refuses to reveal. The mind is confused between two directions. It can neither submerge itself nor express itself; it neither reveals nor creates; and so its humanity remains hidden.

Even its impress of a tormented mind becomes diffuse, incoherent. Since we do not know where it loved, we cannot tell where it hated. Since it cannot affirm itself, it cannot draw a conscious affirmation from us. It is just because of this amorphous effort, this sense of titanic labour exhausted in space, that wandering and uncertain minds find a sense of vastness in its achievement. But it is vast, like the air, because it has neither beginning nor end. The essence of the creative effort is that we should never doubt its affirmation, or its individual expression of thought, passion, or beauty. When these are indefinite, all expression exists only in outline, and however vast the space it covers, all within its lines has no significance.

MILTON AND DANTE.

We see this peculiar phenomenon of a divided impulse again in such minds as Milton and Dante.

Both are tormented by the creative perceptivity; but creation is hindered and muddled by a personal egotism, which they can neither throw aside nor express frankly.

There is something concealed in these minds, some cross purpose, some obstruction which deflects a clear and direct revelation of themselves. Often they arrive at a perfection of expression that startles our admiration, but leaves our humanity dormant.

A flavour of indecision and insincerity intervenes, and instead of the revealing power which takes us within the mind itself, to its inmost recess of passion, we find ourselves held aloof, looking on from without at a structure of mind, whose eminence we may admire, but whose intimacy is withheld from us.

Again, we are almost at the door of objective vision. We know what these minds say, we do not know what they think. They have not been able to put their dreams and desires in a form which will reveal them to us, or reveal us to ourselves.

Such minds are perhaps the most unhappy on earth, for they are denied the correlative of suffering, which is exaltation.

We know how the creative spirit may forge exaltation on the anvil of despair. We know it can express tragedy without dragging us to the spectacle of its little domestic miseries. We know that if it does bring us to its personal revelation, it will hide nothing.

But the half-mind can neither open its heart to us nor submerge itself in the grand manner and reveal the universal heart instead. It cannot even define for us its perception of beauty, which is lost also in its uncertain revelation of self.

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Finally, we must add this serious consideration to such minds as Dante, Milton, Michael Angelo. They are joyless creatures. They have the vice of all lesser minds; a sense of their own domestic tragedy, which turns on life its own disgust for life. In Dante, this emotion turns to something truly horrible, which is expressed in a desire to linger over scenes of physical torment. Such a desire is no more than an admission of pleasure in the spectacle of torment. We find here that impulse which allies chastity to hatred. Where excessive tenderness of emotion is proclaimed, there is, never far from it, an obscure craving for revenge. The big mind that suffers will always repudiate suffering; the little mind will always seek relief by cries of pain, and by the desire to cause pain to others. These extremes of sensuality and asceticism, of love and hate, are the basis of all Eastern minds, and we find an extreme instance of them in Dante.

Milton's chastity, we are apt to guess, springs also from sensuality turned inward, whose excess in deeds seeks the natural disguise of asceticism in words. This good man did not wear out three wives for nothing. For the rest, he remains a colossal literary man, coldly selecting a theme on which to exploit a scholarly capacity to use words.

Expression in such minds as these springs from a strange source—depression. They are the reverse of all lyrical exaltation, which will always vindicate courage and gaiety, passion, and beauty. In this relation, Milton, Dante and Michael Angelo have done more to depress and discourage man than God himself.

No genuine creative spirit suffers these hesitations and evasions. Its direction is always assured, its revelation never in doubt.

If its quest is beauty, we will know where it sought beauty, and its impression on us will be absolute.

Do we ever hesitate before its expression by Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, or Leonardo? The human revelation of each is as distinct as if the creator himself was before us.

But where do we find such an expression in Michael Angelo? Some faint indication of a charm in male beauty, perhaps; but even this is so hidden that we cannot be sure, and must leave its assumption to those literary detectives, the medical psychologists.

The element of mind we have been concerned with here is that which we call Creative vision, and which we take to be the highest form of expression that earthly consciousness can reach.

We put it first because it must inevitably carry with it the perception of beauty, revelation of all that is universal in passion and mind, and because it arrives at the expression by a pre-knowledge already implanted in the mind at birth.

It may take a lesser or longer period to arrive at complete expression, but it never needs to look for expression, or find expression. We may observe in Mozart's precocity the evidence of this completed vision.

Influence and environment, suggestion, instruction, example: these things have no effect

whatever on the actual structure of a completed mind.

Within the limits of earth growth, there is no power that can alter the substance of mind itself an iota.

One must despair of ever carrying conviction of this stated belief. Indeed, perhaps, it is essential that it should be disbelieved, and for an essential reason.

For it is perfectly clear that all objective vision *does* arrive by example, learning, suggestion, and the effect of environment. All that is actually implanted is the power to record its sense of actuality, and certainly this power marks something of great importance to the mass of mankind.

It is *their* encouragement to effort.

If objective vision arrives by the example of creative vision, common mentality arrives by objective vision, because this translates something it is also able to perceive.

Now let us add a valuation to this matter of environment that seems of such immense importance to the objective vision.

This takes for granted that the visible aspect of earthly beauty is a thing proved. Where it is highest to the perception in a beautiful woman, a youth, a child, strong manhood, a spring morning, a moonlit night, evening, light, birds, clouds, flowers, the sea, or any other grace of nature, it is assumed that beauty has arrived, and if we can capture one of these emblems, we have achieved art.

Well, let us put a different value on these manifestations. It is only by altering values that we arrive at value.

Suppose the highest evidences of earth beauty are only half beautiful.

Suppose this which is beautiful to us is only a primitive element of beauty by which we set out to learn the nature of its perfection.

We need not suppose this at all, since the hidden symbol of perfection has allowed man to create an evidence of beauty which is more beautiful than its emblem in life.

Actuality can never give us the conviction of beauty that we get from the Hermes of Praxiteles, from the golden glow of Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne, from the mysterious light of a Rembrandt canvas, or from the atmospheric vision of Turner.

These things spring from a pre-conception already in the mind. Nature's best effort lags behind them, for we must always recall that in recording mentally the visible effect of nature we record something that is within us, not something that is actually in nature itself.

It is difficult to impress this distinction between the thing and the sentiment we evolve from the thing.

Again, words are inadequate. We may suppose it to be a part of what creative perceptivity undoubtedly is, and that is perception by other senses dormant in the mind, waiting development by a higher physical process than the animal structure of earth conditions.

Therefore, if the evidence of creative consciousness is that it is not satisfied with actual-

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ity, but is able to divine and even express something higher than actuality, does not this prove that actuality is only half beautiful?

Therefore, again, the objective mind is that which is content with a manifest imperfection, and wishes nothing better to express.

Now let us return to the valuation already expressed of the limited sensibility and perception of the earthly mind. This is perhaps the most difficult of all revelations, since the very nature of our perceptivity sets a finite limit on our power to perceive, and therefore we naturally suppose earth mind to be a finite and finished element, because we are able to agree as to the extent of its perceptivity.

But to know how far we *can* perceive is not to know how far we *do* perceive. We have reached so far, but how far *have* we reached?

Now, we need not suppose man on earth to be merely a half-formed, half-perceptive creature, because we know that the greater portion of humanity is only half formed and half intelligent, and that another great portion is hardly removed from the lower animals.

And by the same induction we know that the earth itself is not at all what higher vision strives to see it, but is actually a little marshy, slimy, arid spot in the universe, formed of primitive substances, which exhale always the odour of decay, because decay is the process by which it germinates life.

We know this, because the evidence is before our eyes, under our noses. But we know this still better by the higher evidence of mind itself, which is able to divine an existence free from

the pain, squalor, and the germinating decay of life on earth.

Now, what high purpose can be served by perpetuating in art the emblems of a condition, both human and natural, which is ~~not~~ ^{life} 'ly primitive and imperfect.

Even if we accept the best evidence of beauty to perpetuate, we are still accepting things only partially beautiful.

And is it not the whole object of objective vision to do this very thing?

And since life to be anything, must be a process of development, what can be developed by merely observing and noting down the conditions which every eye may discover for itself?

In truth we are brought to a strange conclusion in reviewing what is almost a universal impulse of the earthly mind, if we limit mind only to its perception of earth conditions.

It must simply mean that human perceptivity is *so low* that it must make a perpetual effort even to *see* the conditions that surround it, and that to arrive at this mere power of observation exhausts its capacity to develop further.

Perhaps this mere effort of observation is all that is required of it. But we know that observation cannot arrive by the mechanical act of seeing. It must perceive before it can see, therefore some higher power of vision is required in order to define the thing seen.

And this is what Creative art does. It not only perceives the beauty of actuality, but it adds to its observation of what the thing *is* a perception of what the thing *might* be.

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By going beyond its apparent object, it arouses common perception to the object itself. Without this emphasis by comparison, the act of vision could not be stimulated.

Let us repeat again the understanding of what vision is. It is defining the nature of an object *before* the eye has observed the shape of the object. The exact significance of this truth must be fully understood, because upon it hangs the whole problem of mind. Perhaps we will return to its analysis later, but its present significance is this:

Creative vision has the power of definition, but objective vision has only the power of observation. It is because the symbol of beauty was defined that the emblem of beauty was observed.

Do we not see what happens when the mere power to observe has been laboriously acquired. It sits down contentedly to paint a cabbage or a plate of eggs.

Is there any problem of definition here, unless it be to define the difference between a cabbage and an egg? And even when the highest dexterity is displayed in making this definition, are we any further on the road to a perception of mind?

Even if objective vision transfers its attention to the human face, or to the sunset, and paints these as they are with the utmost dexterity, are we still any further enlivened in that mysterious element we call consciousness?

Unless something is added to these objective problems we remain as we were, mechanical lenses with the power of defining the shape of the thing they chance to reflect.

This cannot be a serious problem, since it is but a mechanism, common to all vision. It can be no more than an exercise in training which begins the problem of definition, for this, most of all, is not merely to define the shape of an object, but to define the nature of the object, and to evolve consciousness by definition.

And this consciousness has nothing to do with the mechanical act of seeing shapes and surfaces, but in selecting elements from shapes and surfaces by which it may define its inner sensations, and so reveal itself. Whatever the object recorded, it is of no value in itself, but as it is used to reveal the mind that records it.

The thing recorded is the accident of expression, just as the alphabet is the accident of recording thought. Whatever be the means of expression, form, sound, or word, the one end of expression is mind itself.

This is the sole problem of art, of consciousness, of morality. It is the sole problem because it is the sole element of life that permits revelation.

We have come to the cross roads here, that is clear.

If you believe life on earth to be an end in itself, then you must believe it a condition capable of perfection. That is, you must believe knowledge by the perception of earth senses to be finite, man a completed intellect, and objective vision the highest expression of mind, since it is the successful expression of a fixed standard of beauty by finite knowledge in a perfected world.

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You will pardon us if we find your convictions here like those joyous cries of the Optimist, which he utters to disguise his anguish at the stings of life.

Our pessimism is complete in all that registers your highest hope of perfection on earth.

The structure of your life; the events of your days; the agitations which beset your struggle to exist; the rules of conduct which seem to you the evidence of moral perception—all these we believe to be as ephemeral as smoke, blown here and there as the wind of chance wills.

We believe that all you conceive to be stable in the structure of your life exists on a thread as brittle as cotton and as easy to snap.

We believe that over all which is troubled, painful, or narcotic in the dull level of this existence, the passage of beauty is like a cloud shadow, so lightly does it emphasise the light and shade of life; a thing so fragile that you must climb a hill in order to perceive its passage across the plain.

We believe that mind itself exists in the darkness that you call life, and that its revelation comes only at intervals, rare and vivid, like a statue seen by lightning in a dark night.

And this glimpse is the one element of stability your life possesses. It is the one thing eternal, indestructible.

Generation after generation arrives at life like a vast army marching to battle, dusty, sweating, terribly aware that to-morrow it kills, or is killed, scourged by terror and pity, yet still obsessed by the human egotism which insists that life has no other demonstration but by its physical consciousness.

And this physical consciousness, upon which exists your conception of the visibility of life, and which you express by objective vision, is a thing that an iota of decayed matter may destroy utterly.

Is it to this end, then, that you conceive the problem of consciousness tends; to come to life *in order* to express what is most perishable, and perish like it.

We no longer consider this question worth answering, yet we submit again to you the paradox of earth.

You must believe life here to be an end in itself in order to advance beyond it. But if you believe life here to be an end in itself you cannot advance beyond it.

Let us bring this to a simpler understanding.

What you believe, or I believe, does not matter. If the symbol of a perfection beyond life on earth exists in our minds, we will advance towards it, even if we suppose ourselves advancing to an earthly end in itself.

“But *all* cannot have the symbol,” we cry, “where can be its universal application?”

On earth there is *no* universal moral problem. We exist here for a physical purpose, which is to produce life by birth.

The impulse that develops mind goes quite beyond this process of physical germination. It has no fixed direction; all it has is the consciousness of its effort to develop. This effort, if it be continuous and sustained, arrives only at the perception of perfection, never at perfection. Perception, therefore, is sufficient for us on earth, for since it goes a step beyond earth it

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has clearly reached the limit of its power to develop on earth.

If it has reached its limit, there remains for it only patience, good humour, and anticipation of the first great adventure that life can offer us, which our dullness calls death.

THE BARGAIN

WHETHER consciousness creates, reveals or exposes, its morality demands that it should give itself to life, not drive a grocer's bargain in exchange for comfort and security.

Life makes the terms. "You must give. I have already given."

This power to give has been bestowed. Integrity must pay the debt in kind.

That which we give is Self; all we have; the best we have. We cannot give half, for it will not be taken. No parade of generous emotion will avail here; no calling upon Life to witness that we have given all. If there is the smallest reserve of secrecy laid up in the cellar, the bargain is void.

Life is a naked goddess and we must come to her unclothed and unashamed. A naked mind has no pockets. It is useless coming to this shrine in a pair trousers; they will be the evidence that you are hiding something.

All minds that commit themselves to expression commit themselves to the bargain with life. But of the thousands upon thousands who come to this bargain how few keep it; how few perceive even its existence. If we come to contemplate this failure of intention we will come to one of the strangest evidences the human mind may express, and that is the deliberate evasion of the very thing it strives hardest to achieve.

For this we see clearly. Nearly all minds that arrive at an articulate expression of life

turn aside at its serious problems. Wherever the expression concerns passion, or the physical functions of humanity, it becomes shy, furtive, self-conscious, ashamed, morbid, or frankly hypocritical.

In the actual expression of passion it has none of this furtiveness. In going about its physical functions, it is even proud and frank. But the moment its expression becomes mental it becomes automatically lying and evasive. And it is most pleased when it is most lying and evasive.

To understand this phenomena we must return to the basis from which we attack all natural and human problems, which is to discover the normality of a condition and strive to account for its normality, instead of demanding that it should become abnormal to suit our pre-conceptions of it.

If we suppose that the understanding of these minds is to express sincere vision of life, or of themselves, we must suppose that humanity has arrived at a vast conscious conspiracy to be most insincere in expressing what it is most sincere in doing.

But this is a manifest absurdity. To become exasperated, as the critic of life becomes, and hurl indignation at this insincerity is not only bad taste, but bad psychology.

If we alter the angle of vision a trifle we may even find these expressions are most sincere where they seem most evasive. We have confounded the direction of their expression, that is all.

That which is expressed here is not mind at all, or at least, mind in embryo. It is a mind

whose eyes have just opened, and which records what it first sees, and what it sees will seem to it most important.

What it sees is actuality, the visible spectacle of existence, and of man involved with the social system, which enables him to exist.

We know what this system is.

It exists to keep order, procure food, and mitigate the harshness of nature by a little comfort and entertainment.

To these sole ends its regulations, which it calls polities, and its rules of conduct, which it calls morality, will be directed, and as the need for order requires that there should be a common agreement on material and physical problems, it will naturally put a strict embargo on any free and individual expression in such matters. Here bad conscience will be the consciousness of breaking the common agreement, good conscience that which upholds the agreement.

Now we have no difficulty in seeing what those embryo minds are doing.

They are expressing what is to them a serious and most important matter, which is the common social agreement to submerge individual passions to the general level of society. They are not individual minds at all, but units of the common mind, if mind can be used at all in relation to this primitive procedure.

Therefore their sincerity will *not* be concerned in expressing themselves by an individual vision of their own passions and acts, but in subordinating these to the common agreement, so that whenever consciousness of self obtrudes bad conscience will be aroused, and the emotion

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will be one of shame for a breach of the common morality of conduct.

Now we see clearly that mind cannot be concerned very much in expressing a problem which is almost wholly concerned with the belly, for food and physical comfort are the whole basis of the social system.

For this reason the social impulse is the very antithesis of the creative impulse, which is wholly concerned to record its individual consciousness of beauty, or its revelation of self. And by doing so it will automatically arouse the suspicion and resentment of the social mind, and if the creative revelation is sufficiently emphatic to attract attention it will be repudiated and possibly attacked.

Do we see what is really happening here?

All consciousness, which is morality, exists on earth solely by the expression of high individual consciousness, whose revelation is by the creative mind.

Even the social impulse, which is consciousness at its lowest, comes into being because mind itself had posited its consciousness of the problem of man's destiny on earth. Without this revelation the social impulse would *not have existed at all*.

THE INDIVIDUAL MIND

IT is clear that when the social consciousness is aware of its direction, which will be sociological, political, historical, or scientific, it will do much useful and laborious work.

It will be no less useful if it seeks no other end but to decorate or amuse, for here it will assist to relieve the nervous pressure under which all minds exist on earth.

But where it becomes involved by imitation or education with the creative impulse, there will be exasperation and confusion on both sides.

To the high consciousness this social pretence at creative enthusiasm will appear the worst of all insincerity, for it will appear to begin the act of creation by deliberately depriving itself of its virility. What is worse, it will appear to flourish its act of castration as the evidence of a special refinement, by virtue of which it is able to make the most delicate sounds in singing.

But we have discarded the accusation of insincerity here. The problem is one of incapacity. The bargain is not kept, because the bargain is not perceived; because, in short, it is actually engaged in keeping quite another sort of bargain.

We may perhaps come best at understanding those minds which can reveal themselves by putting aside first those which reveal nothing.

There are so many of these that it is hard to select an example. They are so easy, so flexible, these minds, such good gentlemen's valets

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that at a glance it is hard to tell master from man.

For first of all, these pretenders are able to cut a good figure. They have lived in an atmosphere of wit, learning and elegance, and have all the formulas of polite society at their finger tips.

Pope is the example of such a mind. Without learning it would be at a loss for speech. It is not a man that speaks here, but a voice. It is a voice without passions, without prejudices, but it sings prettily. All that comes from it are formulas, made up of any man's thought. Mentality has become a machine for turning words into form. We do not trouble to define even a sensation to this machine. It does not stir us to even reject. All that we care to notice is that it tinkles words pleasantly.

Addison is another of these machines, but here the machine is used to disguise the machinist. The machinist may have nothing much to disguise, but what an elaborate parade he makes of his mask.

This sociological tract writer wishes most to present himself to the world as a Good man.

All these pretty little sermons on conventional rules of conduct; sermons dressed in a lady's toilet of words, are designed only to draw attention to the preacher.

If there is an expression of mind here it is a wretched one, for it can conceive no higher ideal of man than to be a good citizen. All that touches its own humanity is sneakingly hidden; if there is a secret we can only divine it by the parade of secrecy, but for any high revelation of mind we might as well come to its social

antithesis as expressed by a brothel-keeper's mind, like Wycherley.

If a convention makes both minds, one at least wears its convention openly, though it may annoy our ears by its tavern brawling. But the other is so hidden behind its frills and laces, and so perfumed with sweet and sickly essences that its form is shapeless, and even the smell of its humanity is lost.

On another plane of secrecy is the mind which hides behind a parade of exposure.

The worst example here is Rousseau; a mind so permeated by a passion for lying that the lie becomes its sole valuation of truth. In order to carry a conviction of truth by falsehood it will even expose itself in the gutter. It will go deliberately into the gutter in order to say: "Now you cannot doubt the sincerity of this mud on my garments."

Sincerity is the pose of this good man, which he will maintain at the cost of any insincerity. But he is subtle. He is not a Frenchman for nothing. Where the bumble-headed goodness of his brother Addison is apt to make us yawn, Rousseau is careful to divert our attention by an unseemly prank or two. There is genuine mud on his mind, for he has put it there himself, but he has been careful at the same time to leave certain holes in his disguise through which we can see the Good man quite clearly, and no mistake can be made.

Casanova also made a deliberate effort at exposure of mind. We need hardly question the intention here. Undoubtedly the truth is told, but it is the truth according to St. John. You may question Casanova's ability to tell the

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truth, but not his intention. He told all he knew about himself, but the question is, how much did he know?

The episodes, the actions of life, reveal little. They are only the shapes of an actuality, which may take any shape. What matter is the shape of the actor's mind.

The shape here is not a very fine one. It is coarsely moulded. To read its expression is no more than to experience a condition of actuality.

It may be a pleasant diversion to analyse this mind; to discover what it is from what it thinks it is. We see that it is always parading a sense of dignity, because it lacks dignity. We see that it takes on the air of a great noble because it is in reality a nobleman's lackey. But is all this worth seeing?

The fact is, this Italian adventurer has a shallow intellect, and revelation of mind cannot come from such a source.

We observe this best when the imitation of such an imitation arrives at its expression, as in the case of one George Moore. The instance is trivial, and one that Time will forget, but Time will reproduce its prototype and it may serve as an example of what revelation is not.

There could hardly be a better example of the bogus confessional impulse than this. It is a perfect mole, this little mind, in the activity with which it throws up mounds of earth in order to bury itself from sight. Its ingenuity is solely engaged in directing our attention to the mounds of dirt, in order that we should forget the mole.

The pose here is not that of a bad man or a good man, but merely of a little man who wants to cut a good figure before his contemporaries. Its effect is no more than a literary essay in self-consciousness, based solely on social vanity. The impulse that makes a fuss about one's tailor or one's hatter could hardly reveal more of mind or passion. It is, in short, a species of day-dreaming, which drives most immature minds to literary expression. The little fancies and heroics that a boy or girl weave about themselves at night in bed find their final outlet in such essays, and though the diversion may be innocent and universal, it is not one that we can be serious about.

Shakespeare has epitomised once and for all this secret ideality of self in Malvolio. But here, because the exposure is perfectly understood, we are startled and rendered conscious by it. In the case of George Moore the exposure is so misunderstood that, like Sir Toby Belch, we roar with laughter at it.

The truth would seem to be this.

Sincerity itself is of no value in any revelation of mind. The mind must have within it something worth being sincere about before it can be of value.

All expression of mind is more or less sincere.

Even insincerity is the sincere expression of an insincere mind, but that is no reason why we should value it. It may have a partial value in expressing itself as a valueless thing, so that we may better see what *is* valuable.

From such an aspect alone we can estimate a mind as low as Tolstoy's, which is no more

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than a peasant egotism, ferocious and barbarous.

We need not be deceived by its humanitarian cries. These are but natural mimicry, uttered as unconsciously as a tiger wears stripes. Love for man is expressed here by hatred for man. This animal would smash the Hermes of Praxiteles in order to place upon its pedestal a grimy workman, dull, stupid, ugly and mindless, and write above it the legend of its hatred.

“Behold this terrible emblem of my self-pity.”

Another of these peasant egotisms is that demented tinker, Bunyan. In the horrible madhouse visions of this creature we hear groans and sobs, shrieks of despair and terror, frenzied appeal for release from the torment of its fears —a release which it seeks without hesitation in beatific dreams of Heaven.

There can be no problem of mind here, where physical convulsions are accepted as spiritual revelations. It is due to the ravings of such tormented organisms that sapience has connected epilepsy with intellect.

This creature actually sees lights, is enveloped in darkness, hears voices, and is attacked by visible demons. It grovels, foams at the mouth, bursts into howls, tears, prayers. . . . The spectacle is disgusting. A savage in the grip of remorseless enemies might show more dignity and courage, but this savage has congested his dull brain with eastern imagery, and nothing is more inevitable than that a creature so terrified, so epileptic, yet so egotistic will conceive himself to be a special prize for both the powers of good and evil, who will wage a cease-

less war for the possession of his priceless soul, which in the end will be carried off triumphantly by hosts of angels.

Thus all kingdoms of God are manufactured on earth, as a release from the scourge of terror on stupified brains.

It is the very test of mind that because it suffers, it repudiates suffering. It takes the blows of fate with stoicism, with anger, or with laughter.

But the weak mind succumbs. It cries for mercy. From the depths of its self-pity it dreams of unending love, tenderness, and escape from itself.

We must pause at this unpleasant tinker for a reason.

Primitivism has become strangely involved with the problem of style, and we owe this confusion to scholarship and connoisseurship.

The one quality which adds a value to primitive art is simplification of form. Because the primitive mind sees form with difficulty, it arrives first at the generalised mass of form, to which it adds only a few prominent details, which are themselves generalised forms.

These efforts are nearly always pleasing, because the eye arrives at their meaning by a minimum of effort. Because they are simple, they present no irritating details, which might arrest the smooth contours and directness of their expression, and we understand why refined minds are charmed with them.

But when the primitive mind begins to perceive other things, such as emotion, gesture, the

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nature of textures, it will become prolific, over-decorated, over-stressed.

And here connoisseurship very justly rejects, for these efforts of the half mind are nearly always in bad taste, because they have lost the charm of simplicity, and have not achieved the power to select essential forms, to modify unnecessary details, and to present textures beautifully, which are the special evidences of a high mind.

But there is a vast difference between this exact judgment which simplifies form by rejecting what is ugly, and the primitive effort which remains simple because it has no power of selection whatever.

What Rodin arrives at by the selection and modification of form in order to express an emotional vision of beauty arouses us to the very highest consciousness of mind; what the simplified primitive effort bestows on us is only the relaxing sensation of charm.

It is just because primitive art has no complexity of mind to express, that complex minds turn to it as a release from their own complexity.

The attraction here is not mental, but physical. What is felt is a sense of refreshment; of a release from intellectual stress; in fact, a narcotic for the nerves.

Do not let us be deceived here.

The charm of all simple and direct expression, which we find in the Bible, in the law books of Manu, or in any other primitive work well translated, we will find in such primitive expressions as that of Bunyan, or Walt Whitman, or any other simple mentality that arrives at

expression by a paucity of symbols, and consequently by a simplicity of utterance.

The emphasis of such simplicity is that it reacts as a tonic on nervous minds, jaded with a surfeit of pretentious forms masquerading as style. The effect is that of a draught of cool water after a debauch of bad wine.

And the pleasure is doubled because the problem of what is expressed is wholly put aside for the way it is expressed. Connoisseurship alone is called upon for an emotion, and no emotion is so pleasant to experience.

In truth, boredom is at the bottom of this expression of pleasure, and we know also what medical psychology prescribes as a regimen for over-taxed nerves.

One needs only to have lain sick in a room where the wall-paper had a tortured pattern to know the craving for bare walls, subdued colouring, and a minimum of all stress on the optic nerve.

We hope it is clear that all valuations of mind here are removed from valuations of belief.

Belief, whatever it expresses, has little to do with the morality we seek, which is concerned with the quality of high consciousness of itself that mind may express.

A high mind, like Nietzsche's, may express belief, but here it is mind that makes belief, not belief that makes mind. It is by the structure and perception of this mind that we proclaim it noble, not by the intrinsic value of its beliefs. Plato, we know, concerned himself with many

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idle themes of belief, but the high quality of his mind is never in doubt.

If mentality comes to life, and accepts a common formula of belief all ready made for it, the acceptance is proof that the mind arrived at life empty, and needed to learn expression in order to have even the power of speech.

Morally, there is no difference in value between a libertine's mind like Casanova's or a little suburban girl's mind like that of Marie Bashkirtseff, because there is no distinction in quality of mind. Addison is a good citizen, and Rousseau a very bad citizen, yet the revelation of mind is equal in both, and equally valueless.

Such a statement must be emphatic. All that is humanly kind and orderly in man is an element of mind already there. Maxims of good conduct or maxims of bad conduct cannot alter it. No power of example or circumstance, nor learning can make a bad mind good, or a mind bad. All that mind may do is to enlarge its intrinsic structure, and develop its elemental powers. Development alone is possible, but not alteration, and development can only arrive by consciousness.

We must keep repeating this simple understanding of the problem of our morality, in order that the eternal confusion of the social impulse should be kept out of a problem with which it has nothing to do.

SEX

ONE thing will become very apparent in all that reveals the high consciousness that goes beyond earth, and that is, that it will never lose sight of earth. Most of it will never lose sight of the universal physical impulse in man, which is to produce life.

For this reason, all creative mind will express delight in the physical aspect of love. It will exalt the human body, because this is the instrument of love; it will adore sex; it will repudiate that miserable and unclean impulse of shame for the function of procreation.

As the extreme of creativeness is destructiveness, so the impulse which hates the high manifestation of man will hate also the condition which produces man.

At the extreme here we find Puritanism, Asceticism.

Asceticism may be only the failure of the life impulse. The nun, the celibate priest---perhaps it is life which rejects here. But puritanism is active opposition to all that is fecund, super-abundant, life-producing, and therefore we must class it as the worst immorality.

Even that which is called indecency on earth, where it expresses the normal physical desire of man for woman, is hardly ever anything more serious than social furtiveness. Aberrations of sex have nothing to do with morality. At their extreme they arrive at asceticism, since they are also the failure to produce life.

The libertine who exhausts himself; the priest who comes to life already exhausted;

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what has life to do with either of these failures?

We find our morality strictly involved with sex, for since we believe that mind is the inherited receptacle of mind, and life the inherited gift of life, the first duty of mind is to reproduce itself, and the second duty to develop itself.

With this understanding, we will perhaps put a very different estimate than society has done on those gay and free minds who have most frankly expressed the emotion of love.

To express the beauty of femininity; to respond by songs and pictures and melody to the impulse of sex will be the evidence of morality, and no stupid opposition from the dull social mind must deter its expression. These cries of rancour have no meaning even to those who utter them, and the next generation of fools will wonder what they were all about.

Remember, if you have the courage and power to transcribe your vision of life truly, opposition at first will be inevitable. But train your mind to disregard it. If your work is done, your physical mission fulfilled, life on earth is at least short. Put up with its triviality and dullness.

Shakespeare has left us his sonnets, the most exquisite analysis of love we possess. More than these even, we have its presentment in his dramas, in all those passionate young hearts that love so frankly, instantly, without shame or hesitation. The embrace of the eye is followed always by the embrace of the body.

Moreover, this great vision has understood every aspect of passion, from the sexual impulse that mates at contact, as young birds mate, to its power on strong organisms, which becomes even self-destructive.

Beethoven has recorded the very vibrations of passion itself on the mind and body. The Sonata Appassionata epitomises all that the human heart may express of desire, memory of love, despair, suffering and the repudiation of its own suffering.

Wagner, one of the greatest creative minds, has expressed and revealed this emotion here so profoundly that realisation does actually move a physical impulse.

"Should great Art move us to emotion?" ask the little temperate aesthetes, who have no emotion to be moved.

What is a sense of beauty but the profoundest emotion the human mind can record? What is physical loveliness but the emblem of physical desire?

Poor dull devils, you stand daily before the emblems of all that can be serious and important to you on earth, and yet wonder vaguely if great art should move you to emotion.

The achievement of Wagner, more than any other great mind, is the evidence that all creative art must touch the universal physical impulse of passion.

There is no cold mental analysis here, after the manner of Flaubert and the diagramatists,

but the living, breathing creation of passion itself—its dreams, ecstasies, throbs and cries of delight.

No wonder Puritanism has smelt danger here. This great power might almost create desire where desire was dead. Even Nietzsche, who said “Art is the praise of life,” attacked this supreme evidence of the truth of his own aphorism. But this spleen was of the nerves; insincere; as insincere as Wagner’s own talk of Christianity and renunciation, which his work utterly repudiated.

We do not need to analyse what Rubens and Titian meant by their golden visions of sex. It is because they loved and desired the beautiful bodies of women that they sang of love and desire in paint.

Beauty may seek other expressions, complexities of light and nature, but its emblem must first be human beauty.

In Leonardo’s words: “Man, and the intention of his soul, which must be expressed by the attitude and movement of the limbs.”

Body must be the emblem of mind in all expressions of passion and human beauty, for to dissociate these is to dissociate the universal physical morality of birth from the universal morality of mind.

Poor, stupid social animals, you who go always in dread of passion, do you not know that this is the very evidence of failure in you of the life force? Do you not know that you hate passion because you lack passion? Do you not know that if passion, and the expression of passion failed the high vision of man, you

would decay and perish like the substance of earth to which you belong.

Finally, do you think that the mere human brute; the blind organism of the senses, will come to the fountain-head of beauty and mind to find its desires justified? It will never even know that beauty or mind exist. Since it is the extreme of all that is lovely and conscious in life, it can only reach to a little perception through *you*, who are nearest to it, and therefore your shivers of disgust are the only evidence of the presence of beauty it will ever discern. Beware, then, lest you bring the vengeance of the brute upon you.

We have noticed here the expression by creative minds of the universal impulse for passion. Let us analyse also that other high creative, impulse, the personal expression of mind and passion.

All creative impulses are personal and individual, only in some cases we find that the emblem of expression is something immediate and local; which becomes also autobiographical, though its theme may appear impersonal.

SWINBURNE AND TENNYSON.

Swinburne is a name almost synonymous with the expression of passion. Let us see, then, what is expressed.

First of all, here is expression at a maximum of capacity to express. Form could hardly be more forceful and yet easy. Every metaphor that a brilliant fancy might conceive is lavished

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on its theme, which unrolls before us a superb imagery of passion, a sonorous melody under the control of a masterly musician.

The naked Goddess of Antique Love is enthroned. That aspect of antiquity that sensitive modern minds have built out of beautiful forms, athletic bodies, woman's beauty fashioned by a grand sculpture, strong and relentless passions, scorn for all that is meek and humble—a pageant of splendid life set in an amphitheatre of splendid architecture. But we know this theme. How many fine minds have enveloped it with a passionate love and regret, from Nietzsche, Gautier, Mallarme, down to a hundred lesser cries of imitation.

In truth, no human spectacle is so solid, so vital, so splendid as this, yet none built upon so intangible a fabric of actuality. It is an element of mind that is worshipped here, which takes the form of concrete realities, because these, too, are also the heritage of mind.

Swinburne, perhaps, more than any other mind, found his inspiration here. It is the element from which he has drawn his whole conception of passion.

Here, then, is where revelation ends.

Passion is first of all the personal expression of mind, not the translation into form of an alien element of mind.

Let us look closer at this imagery of passion.

Does it spring from the emotional exaltation by which all passion records itself.

We see that it springs from a diametrically opposite impulse; from the despair of realising passion.

These images are of death, decay, of all that is faded, burnt out, exhausted. Passion is not revealed, but the craving *for* passion. Desire calls for desire, but there is no response.

Certainly there can be no revelation of passion here. Then is the poet telling us of his own failure to achieve passion?

That, unfortunately, we cannot tell. The poet himself is hidden. Complete freedom of utterance here is repudiated by complete secrecy of mind.

The contrast is so strong that we remain mystified. Is this a failure of perception in us, of a failure of revelation in the poet? We may wander at will through this splendid architecture of sound, where all doors are thrown open save one, and that, alas, is the one that conceals the poet's mind from us.

All this talk of love reveals neither the lover nor the woman he loved. We listen to its music with pleasure, but it reveals no real emotion in ourselves. We may echo its passionate regret for perished beauty, but then, since we do not believe that beauty can perish, but remains as an indestructible element of mind, our regret is idle.

No, this is not a song of passionate love, but the song of a passionate antiquarian. These songs were not written to the living flesh and blood, but to a beautiful antique statue of femininity.

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Tennyson is another poet who reached a perfection of expression, and who is understood to have sung a good deal about love.

Well, we cannot really be at the trouble to analyse the nature of this jewelled prattle.

The social bargain is expressed here in ex-celsis.

A school girl might have more to tell us of genuine passion than we may find in these artificialities of the heart, concocted from suburban novels and children's fairy stories. Surely connoisseurship in expression might find a supreme warning here, where expression is perfected, but revelation utterly dead.

BURNS AND BYRON.

Let us have done with what the individual revelation of mind is not. We have the revelation of what such a mind is in two supreme examples: Burns and Byron.

Nowhere else has the human heart and mind been exposed to us so frankly or in a finer manner. Here expression and revelation go hand in hand. There is no hesitation, no confusion; each mind is starkly revealed; we know what is thought as well as what is said; we know the love songs and the lovers; we may clasp in our minds the women they adored.

There is a singular affinity between these two minds, so that one might almost suppose them to spring from the same strain, and that Sappho mated with a possible Catullus to give it birth.

Both these minds came to theme and expression as easily as a bird sings. Both were

great lovers, and as was most just, both were singularly beautiful men. Both incurred the inevitable rancour of society for their frankness and courage, and both repudiated the attack by turning upon society with derision. Finally, both used their lives to the utmost, and threw away youth with a complete scorn for the valetudinarian caution which saves up the little vitality which it never has the chance to spend.

There is a recklessness in spending here that springs not only from superabundance of vitality, but from the love of life that transcends the little triviality of living. It must have the best, the highest that life can offer, and to get this it will give prodigally in return. Furthermore, this generosity of giving has its roots in a deeper impulse still, which is the desire to force from life something better than life is able to give.

The reaction here will be inevitable. Since both these poets were great lovers, both pursued that phantom of dreams, the realisation of love, so that the unhappiness of both was assured.

But here the test of creative mind is apparent. Both acclaimed the dream, not the realisation.

Both turned upon life's failure to respond a triumphant song of love.

We do not forget the black misanthropy which dogged Byron through life, and which gave birth to *Manfred* and his dark tragedies. But these are autobiographical, only a part of that personal revelation of this gay, violent, and tragic mind.

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The real song is that of youth. Its cry is that of Euripides:

"And shall not loveliness be loved for ever?" to which the crudity and brutality of earth return so mocking an answer.

If Byron had written only the episode of Juan and Haidee, if Burns had left us only a handful of his lyrics, youthful passion would still have been immortally sung on earth.

Here is the true innocence of the senses, happy and frank, for which all that is beautiful in nature is only the setting.

It is the real function of love we are called upon to witness, which arrives at procreation in a spirit of delight.

Here women are truly adorable. Spring-time and flowers, new mown hay, poppies and roses—these can but adorn the beauty of young limbs, young hearts. There is nothing painted here; lips are not more scarlet than the blood pressure of mouth to mouth; no more exotic odours are called for than the scent of hair and skin.

We have done with the little cheap cynicisms that pull women to pieces in spite because they are unable to love them; we have cast aside the little sad minds which crave for the passion they could not respond to if it arrived.

Femininity is no longer on the operating table, where depleted physical energy has placed it, in order to reveal by a scalpel the passion that could not be revealed by a kiss.

What these two great poets have revealed to us is the road from youth to manhood. If we have not travelled here we have never tra-

velled through life at all, and the mind that failed to dream of love as love is expressed here can never know love, but must buy a little miserable experience at the public brothel of social custom.

We have seen what the critical perception of passion expresses in Swinburne. Burns and Byron are the expression of passion itself.

There is all the world of difference between these two aspects; the one which realises the thing, the other which *is* the thing.

Not by learning of an emotion can we experience emotion. The most exquisite imagery can never tell a eunuch what life has deprived him of.

In order to achieve consciousness we must arrive at the fountain-head of passion and life, and the road is revealed by the song that sings from blood as well as spirit.

There is a significance in Byron particularly that must not be forgotten; a significance as deep as the problem of universal consciousness.

We see that he arrived in a dull and uninspired age. We see that mind has relaxed; become automatic; is concerned with turning out mechanical insincerities.

The social chatter which is called Literature on earth has replaced in such an age the consciousness of mind. True, it is always going on, this interchange of popular taste on little matters of affairs and aestheticism; but left to its devices it becomes a petrified process, which in the end would degenerate into Egyptianism and complete inertia.

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What is needed is some strong vitality of mind to startle consciousness back to the real problems of life, which are those of passion and beauty; but, most of all, Sex.

This is Byron's significance; by this regenerating vitality he towers above his century.

Out of a dull age he arose, and there followed, as we know, a re-vitalisation of human emotion.

To-day, in a dull age, he is forgotten, as all the great regenerating powers, the Greeks, Shakespeare, Rubens, Titian, and Beethoven are forgotten.

To-morrow, the arrival of one great reviving mind will be sufficient to restore consciousness to man, and for this Messiah each generation must wait.

Have we ended the generation of great revealing passionate minds with Burns and Byron?

To us, who have lived through this sad period of a universal war, it would seem so.

Surely this century has gone justly to its death, since its life was the vile creed of the belly; a dark age of little tradesmen's ideals, of the spirit of Americanism, of human hatreds clothed in humanitarian talk; an age of stagnant minds and furious mechanical activity in affairs. How could high consciousness exist here, epitomised by an outburst of primitive hatred and primitive art.

Do not be deceived, good curiosity mongers and studio-bred folk. The minds that paint you pretty theories of colour music and Futuristic

fooleries are just as dark as those savage primitive brutes who planned a universal war on mankind.

Where consciousness is equally low it will take any direction. All that divides it is a fraction of blood pressure.

But our morality believes that mind cannot perish. It may sleep, or be silenced for a generation, but must come to life again, in order to save life from perishing.

Let us wait, then, and listen. If we have ears we may catch once more the notes of song, rising above the clamour of a dull and sordid age, which has forgotten beauty.

We shall know this new voice, because it will sing of all that is eternally young, eternally old. It will have done with little seccrecies and evasions; it will not make an image of life out of words, but will mould words from the vital substance of life itself.

This poet will be great because he will reveal himself; because he will be the lover as well as one who sings of love.

He will give us his heart made into song. His vitality will re-animate ours, so that the faith in life we have lost will return to us. That magic power which moulds the intractable substance of speech into an essence of sound, form and passion will bring the Deathless Gods back to earth. Women will no longer be little over-dressed shadows of a sociological problem, but will return to our embrace naked and lovely, offering their plump hands with long tapering fingers, and their white breasts to our devout kisses. We will wed this proud femininity to

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our dreams, in order that we may regenerate it in the flesh, so that the image of beauty made in song may re-people the earth with vital children.

Once again Love will be adorable, Life strong and gay; the spirit that takes its flight upward will not sing of Heaven, but of the living beauty of "Flesh clasped naked in a web of pearls."

Wait, then, and listen. If you cannot hear the voice itself you will catch at least the murmur that proclaims it.

For this we see clearly. It is useless on earth to affirm the greatness of a living mind. Consciousness must have arrived before consciousness is perceived. So slow is perception of mind here that it can only arrive as the slow reaction on other minds. Even Shakespeare is still mistaken on earth for a play-writer, and those minds which appreciate him most are least aware that it is to him they owe the power to appreciate.

But there is a reason for this apathy in the presence of present greatness; a reason as profound as the struggle for existence.

Vanity is the stimulus that keeps energy alive. Humility vitiates courage to sustain the individual effort.

Therefore, reverence for Greatness of Mind is only possible as an idea. We demand that time and death should make an unbridgable gulf between a great man and ourselves, since the immediate conviction of his greatness would annihilate all little egotisms.

THE HUMAN REVELATION

THREE is an aspect of mind that our analysis may seem to have overlooked.

In truth, we have hesitated long here, for something closer to us than the remote problem of futurity is at stake.

With the very name of Cervantes there springs up in our minds a sense of greatness.

If we accept the greatness of this mind without question it will surely be no treason to ask *where it is great?*

Our conviction here is of a mind noble, kindly, tolerant and brave. Its love for humanity, its delight in the spectacle of life, have become our love and stimulus. Understanding is too big here for the little exasperations and hatreds. This generous spirit reconciles us even to all that is mean and base in humanity. If we cannot rid ourselves of its baseness, we can at least turn our back on it. Where ugly, dirty, depressed minds, the Swifts, the Zolas, and the Tolstoys make us sick at the spectacle of man, the nobility of Cervantes restores our humanity. It is a revelation of mind we come to here; the revelation of Cervantes himself, and truly earth cannot show us a nobler human mind.

Great, noble, generous, and kind. But we hesitate at the final word, "creative."

The question must be asked, even though it involve our love and reverence.

Does not this mind stop short at the spectacle of life? Would not its dream be realised by realising the perfection of earthly virtue?

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To answer “yes” here is not to suppose a failure in this mind, but a limitation.

The consciousness it brings us is high, but not the highest.

Its revelation of mind is deep, but not the deepest.

It lacks something of intensity; that something which reveals the hidden symbol of a perfection higher than humanity; a nobler justice than ever earth can show us.

We would be ashamed to utter a deprecating thought of this noble soul, but our morality makes its own distinction in revelation.

If we believed life to be wholly an element of earth; if we believed it could reach no further towards perfection than its best emblem on earth, we would say that Cervantes vindicated the noblest mind on earth.

For its cheerfulness, its courage, its great humanity, make earth a habitable place. Its effort is directed to humanising, cleansing, and making conscious the problems of life here; but here it stops. We are not stirred to that deeper sense of striving, questioning, re-valuing; to that exaltation that arrives by unhappiness, to the repudiation of imperfection in order that we may at least strive for the symbol of perfection.

Rabelais, too, is another of these cleansing minds; one that would regenerate the world with laughter, if mankind were not so sad, so toil-driven, so silly and pompous, and racked by pain for such an heroic remedy. This mind may lack the humanity of Cervantes; it may trample a little on the skirts of beauty, and may be

something too austere for the gaiety of love, but it is broad, tolerant, and profoundly sane. Such minds save us from Bedlam and the evils of priesthood, and perhaps we love this one most where it is least creative; for its repudiation of all dreams; its Homeric commonsense.

Dickens, also, is of this brotherhood of laughter and humanity. Chaucer, Petronius—these are great lovers of life, great laughers. We cannot call them mere objective visions. They go far beyond the exact reflection of life. They have the beginning of the creative impulse, which is exaltation. Their love for Life brings us to the best that is in man, but there it stops.

They do not perceive that something which is better than man; that something which drives the mind equally to despair and exaltation, to search for the emblem of beauty on earth only to carry it to a conviction of the symbol of beauty beyond earth. We see that all the great earth minds subsist on hope for man. We see that all the great creative minds arrive at despair for man.

Can any evidence be more apparent of the great future problem of development beyond earth than this titanic unhappiness of the creative mind, which arrives at the highest perception on earth of beauty, which proclaims exaltation by all that it perceives of beauty and nobility, yet which turns on man the repudiation of its despair.

Do not confuse here, I pray you, the little personal sense of despair that finds despair holy, the expression of which we find in such minds

as James Thomson, Berlioz, even, in spite of his exquisite sense of beauty, in Chopin.

This finds its outlet in work itself. Despair becomes the inspiration of work, and how can an expression of personal despair be creative?

Read, wherever you will, the personal vision of life expressed by great creative minds, and compare with it the expression of their inner vision.

“Creatures shall be seen upon the earth always fighting with one another. . . . There shall be no bounds to their malice . . . when they have gorged themselves with food it shall gratify their desire to deal out death, affliction, labours, terrors and banishment to every living thing. By reason of their boundless pride they shall wish to rise toward heaven, but the excessive weight of their limbs will hold them down. . . . O earth, what delays thee to open and hurl them headlong into the deep fissures of thy huge abysses, and no longer display to the sight of heaven so savage and ruthless a monster.”

Thus Leonardo, one of the most delicate and refined creative visions the world has seen, closes his long period of speculation on earthly man, and from this utter repudiation and despair we turn to the *Mona Lisa*, which breathes the spirit of mysterious love and perfection.

“Oh, God, thou wilt not leave me entirely in the hands of man, because I will not make a covenant with injustice,” cried Beethoven.

And again: “I love a tree better than a man.”

"Sacrifice, sacrifice always the trifles of life to art."

Finally, with the cry, "God has abandoned me," Beethoven wrote the Ninth Symphony, the grandest hymn of exaltation on earth, which might almost do what Beethoven dreamed of doing: "Restore courage to mankind, teach it to shake off lassitude and cowardice."

"All my life I have never truly tasted the happiness of love," wrote Wagner; "therefore I will raise a monument to a beautiful dream of it."

This unhappy cry is from the creator of Tristan and Isolde.

Again:

"I am very lonely. I often long for death."

"I have only one dream, to sleep so soundly that human misery should exist no more for me."

"What man, during a whole lifetime can gaze into the depth of this world with a calm reason and cheerful heart, when he sees murder and rapine organised; lies, impositions, hypocrisy? Will he not avert his head and shudder in disgust?"

From this very period of despair emerges Siegfried, the spirit of hope and happiness for the future.

Perhaps no other mind was so possessed by this vertigo for all that is base in earthly man as Nietzsche. He strove with the spectacle, we must believe, in vain. To slay "that highest devil, the spirit of gravity, to believe only in a God who could know how to dance," to repudiate the deep woe of the world by proclaiming its still deeper delight; we feel that these

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were expedients only to escape that titanic unhappiness which, in mockery of its own despair, created its dream of "Beyond man," and succumbed to despair.

What other strange expedients this creative unhappiness has fallen upon.

Beethoven acclaiming Liberty and Napoleon in the Eroica Symphony, and expressing that satanic pride which refused to bow to an emperor, but could dream of "freeing the people."

Wagner, distributing revolutionary pamphlets in the streets, and preaching social revolution in Siegfried; Durer hammering socialistic doctrines out of his vision of the Apocalypse; Burns finding the Messiah of liberty in the French revolution; Byron, offering his wealth and courage to the schemes of political bandits, and in the end sacrificing his life in the cause of the people.

It is incredible how all nobility of human development is obscured by the little pomposities of title; how all value has been submerged in the most childish and savage of all valuations.

King—People, who could stoop to find a distinction here?

You who attack kings, you who exalt the people; do you not see that you are only attacking the people and exalting the people?

You who would hang millionaires and love hodmen, do you not see that you are only about hanging one sort of hodman in preference to another?

What is a king, or a millionaire, or a Pope, but the people's dream of greatness, and are not these creatures people of the people?

To tear down a Despotism and enthrone a Democracy is but to tear down one label and put up another.

But what has our morality to do with the people's affairs? We speak of them here only because we have seen the sad spectacle of high and noble minds involved with them.

But we understand this passion. It can be explained in a word, "Loneliness."

"If life may only become free, beautiful and happy, then I will be able to breathe, and to have companions," it cries.

All that Durer has expressed in his "Melancholia" might stand for an emblem of creative despair, for his is also a rare, creative mind that stops suddenly to ask the eternal question: "I create, but to what end, and for whom?"

Where can the answer come from, since the creative mind is its own question, its own eternal enigma?

But we have striven in these pages to find a reply. That which questions also answers. It is sufficient for us to know that the enigma exists, for by that knowledge we advance towards it.

And this advance must be made through the primitive mud of earth, through eternal savagery, in the midst of brutal and ugly sights, vile smells, surrounded by incomprehensibility, by dull minds, absorbed in the belly hunt, or at best, by a little kindness and humanity.

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"Where there is most power of feeling, there of martyrs is the greatest martyr," said Leonardo, but he adds a subtlety which we at least understand.

"There is much in the precepts of common minds that will teach us how to die."

In this pageant of mind we must not forget one lonely little expression of humanity that rises out of a dark, voiceless, and spiritless age.

When the high conscious light of antiquity was blown out, before it burned again brilliantly in the Renaissance, we have a long, dismal interlude; a hiatus of all consciousness in the return of barbarism.

It seems that we stand on the verge of an abyss, from which we have emerged after a long and breathless struggle. If we turn again to stare at this void from which we have escaped, all we can perceive is a vast penumbra; shadows within shadows, and only by prolonged effort do we begin to distinguish shapes, and to catch muffled sounds.

Humanity is there, but stifled, speechless, struggling with unknown terrors in the dark. We catch a glint of steel-clad figures, of brutal faces, overgorged with food and wine, of ferocious eyes behind helmet bars, of savage organisms which exist to eat and kill. Here in the darkness we hear grovellings, shrieks, the hissing of indrawn breath, of blind hatred seeking murder in the night of its darkened soul. Where dim church candles burn we see down a long vista barbaric trappings, shaven crowns,

heavy jowls, the scowling, insolent faces of monks, or those that are cadaverous, pale, emaciated, dreaming ecstatic visions of love, which on earth they seek to satisfy with blood —blood; horrible relics of the primitive fear of darkness, which wishes always to revenge on man its own terror.

Suddenly, in this brutal obscurity, a light burns, a gallows lantern, swinging from a high gibbet, from which dangle corpses in chains, while down below we see a strange carousal of beggar students, priests, harlots and thieves, moved by a feverish gaiety, which bids them eat and drink while they can, to filch love from any gutter, for life is as remorseless as justice, swift as a crow's flight, short as the hangman's rope.

Villon is nearest to us by his remoteness. Realisation arrives by an anomaly. We are conscious of mind by a revelation of what mind is not. We arrive at humanity by its absence; at the sense of life by the ever present consciousness of death.

What is it really we see here in these few scattered verses of a beggar student?

A little wolfish organism, lit by a will o' the wisp of genius, craving passionately the good things of life, which to it are a full belly and a warm bed. At least it possesses the one revealing virtue of shamelessness. If it cannot reveal nobility it can at least expose something frankly base, and the ballad of La Grosse Margot is worth a lot of false pretensions at refinement.

Stay, there is one genuine cry from the mind here, startled into utterance by eminent terror.

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It is something even to have a little thief's soul exposed to us at the moment of physical extinction. To-morrow this shivering body will hang on the gallows, triced up in chains, and already it feels the sharp beaks of birds picking at its hair and eyes, and feels the putrid gallows' wind blow through its tattered flesh. For this spectacle it prays us the grace of prayer for its shrinking soul, and we return it, instead of prayer, the absorbed glance of a spectator who looks on at something repellent and fascinating; the presentment of mind upon its moment of violent detachment from the flesh.

PEPY'S—BOSWELL

HERE we come to two of the strangest evidences of mind that the history of mind can present us with.

This is high consciousness with a minimum of the air of consciousness; revelation that appears unaware of revelation.

We leave all assumptions of innocence and simplicity in this relation to the social mind. How should those who live by secrecy understand the revealing mind.

No mind that has the power of revelation can be other than a conscious mind. It may not take a conscious direction; it may suppose itself something else; but if it reach our consciousness, disturb and excite it, it has performed that which only creative art can do.

We cannot call such rambling expressions of mind creative, for, first of all, they spring from the common course of existence, and find their actual interest in all that is least permanent and important to mind. But with all this they reveal mind, naked and unashamed, and this revelation constitutes a rare evidence of consciousness.

It is so rare that perhaps it will bring us to a strange conclusion.

For out of thousands upon thousands of direct and intentional efforts at revelation these two expressions alone remain absolute. Search as we will, there are no others save those which express direct creative consciousness.

Montaigne knows very well what he is about. He is an anatomist of life; the most revealing

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anatomist that ever lived, and one that holds all the little diagramatists in the hollow of his hand; but high as its consciousness is, the effort is detached, analytic. It explains rather than reveals. It is a demonstration of what consciousness is by a refined and perceptive mind, but it lacks something of the disturbing effect of revelation by consciousness in action.

Cellini is only an exposure of mentality busy with affairs. He is least conscious of what he exposes. A simple egotism that imagines itself to be a great artist, and is really only a savage but capable craftsman, cannot take us far on the road to consciousness.

It is in such instances that we must be most careful in separating mind from the mere exposure of mentality. Novels and newspapers do this sort of thing by the thousand.

Revelation must consist in being able to reveal an element of universal passion and emotion. It must touch the master impulses of humanity; the genuine passions and desires which constitute mind itself as we understand that defective organ on earth.

It will be apparent that Pepys and Boswell do succeed in this effort of consciousness; Pepys by revealing himself, and Boswell by exposing Johnson. It is quite as a gratuitous and noble generosity that in the act of exposing Johnson Boswell also reveals himself.

In these two works we follow minutely the trend of mind exposed to the conditions of earth life, and rendered conscious by it.

What element they present of affairs has nothing to do with this revelation.

Johnson's strictures on social morality, wise and absurd; his preoccupation with literary prattle; all this is valueless. What is revealed to us is the universal obsession of mind and physical mortality, expressed with a searching emphasis and horror that goes even beyond Claudio's shivering terror of that end—

“That lawless and uncertain thought;
Imagine howling—”

All Dante's cadaverous pedantry cannot equal the fascination and repulsion for death that Boswell has so shamelessly exposed in Johnson. The whole of German mysticism cannot bring us such a revelation as Johnson's outburst in an Oxford clergyman's drawing-room.

The passion expressed here is the most universal of all earth obsessions, and since it is so poignant, so sincere, *our* reverence for Johnson begins where social patronage has been most complacently extended to him.

We can do very well without dictionaries, but not without such revelations. Nor can we suppose this revelation the accident of biography. It was the eye of a born revealer that saw it, a revealing mind that exposed it.

And where all human issues touch the revelation of mind Pepys reaches an equal power of exciting our consciousness.

How can we speak of this astonishing work, seeing the utter and impenetrable stupidity that hedges it about.

In truth, this at least we can say, that we are shamed by the integrity of this fine mind.

All our sneaking little evasions that we wear so complacently in the face of society are torn

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from us. If our humanity was ever naked, it is here. Through all these pages of hasty scribble we never know at what point consciousness will be startled in us.

The lesser conviction of social secrecy we can excuse, for that collective idiot, Society, demands it; but how can we escape self-knowledge of the little irritations of physical desire, our dreams of realisation which our courage never fulfils, of that pressing eminence of To-morrow, which we are always striving to forget in To-day; of that lonely human terror of the unknown, which we drown in the companionship of all that is human and commonplace. Wherever Fear, Death, Danger, Desire, or the gratification of vanity are touched in Pepys, they are touched with universal consciousness.

In its own strange, wayward, and irresponsible style, this peculiar off-shoot from some creative impulse arrives at the whole complex problem of self-revelation. It is unique, this book. There is nothing else like it in the whole range of human expression.

Let it be understood that we are not seeking a bizarre emphasis. This is not creative revelation, which arrives by beauty and the symbol of a hidden perfection.

But it is consciousness of mind, with the power of stimulating consciousness in other minds.

Minds, be it said, not social organisms.

Contrast it, if you will, with such an organism, one that was particularly active in extending the patronage of literature to the revelation of mind. Stevenson went to a great deal of

pains to leave posterity a portrait of himself. Nearly all his essays, letters and stories are directed to this end. And in this graceful little fancy portrait you will not find a single evidence of mind. It is as charming and insincere as a Boucher pastoral.

It is a sentiment that is expressed and a sentiment that is aroused. Stevenson may have been a graceful personality, but life has plenty of such in its shop window. They may be charming to look at, and charming to live with, but they stir no more serious emotion than a little human or aesthetic pleasure.

No, we no longer believe that such a literary tradesman, full of pretty tricks and fancies, has power to deal over his counter in such a rare commodity as the consciousness of Sam Pepys, nor do we allow a mental ironmonger like Macaulay to trade in the spiritual properties of Boswell.

To contemplate the wretched social snobs who have ranged themselves about these two revelations of minds, excusing them, patronising them, becoming enraged with them, is something to rouse all the contempt one may feel for human opacity of mind.

But we have put aside conscious intention in all expressions of human normality, so we must put aside also contempt, and seek for a reason for this opacity.

And this is not far to seek.

We see that the reason is a physical one. Man has no sense that can penetrate an opaque substance.

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He may divine by certain indications what is going on behind it, but there is no human sense that can annihilate distance and perceive an actuality not displayed to one of its five senses.

Therefore, mind *can* remain hidden on earth. A little of it may be betrayed at times under the shock of emotion, or by conscious effort, but for the rest it remains hermetically sealed up from prying eyes, secure as a mole in the earth.

This consciousness of hiding destroys human power of self-analysis. Self-knowledge is avoided because it disturbs complacence, and the human organism, troubled by other problems, wishes most of all to preserve its complacence, which to it is courage, and so live on good terms with itself.

Now this much is clear. Since the beginning of all consciousness is self, and the expression of all high consciousness revelation of self, there can be no moral impulse that does not begin first with self-analysis.

Therefore, this must be the first problem that all minds must face on beginning development elsewhere; and in order that it *may* not be avoided we see that opacity will be automatically destroyed.

That is, the new condition of life will add to its senses the power to exchange thought, and therefore the power to read thought at a glance.

Now where is security and complacence?

Revelation will be forced on all minds, because hiding will be impossible; and painful and ignominious as will be the enforced consciousness that we must submit to, it will be most

shameful to those complacent social minds that have hidden themselves behind conventional morality on earth.

This supposition of future development by enforced consciousness is hardly an idle one, for do we not see its genesis on earth already in the consciousness of mind revealed to perceptiveness by all high creative effort.

In truth, the Macaulays and Stevensons, and all other secure social egotisms that have dared to patronise the revealing minds of Pepys and Boswell, are only the dupes of their own opacity.

Self-revelation will perhaps be a little more painful to them than to those quieter and more dignified souls that were content to adore in silence the consciousness they could not proclaim in speech.

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This analysis of Mind has gone far enough. To carry it further must lead only to repetition. The instances sought have been those which not only maintain the highest expression of consciousness, but, which exert their greatest effort to draw the wandering attention of man *back* to the physical problem of life on earth.

Man's greatest danger is not that the animal may slay him, but that he may slay the animal. In the stress of pain and nerves, we are so easily tired; so ready to crave the abnegation of Desire; to seek any narcotic that deadens our power to record sensation.

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But sensation is our sole means of self-realisation. By our power to experience, alone grows the power to develop. And development does *not* grow by annihilating passion, but by recording passion.

Our highest symbol of passion, therefore, is Beauty.

And it is by defining Beauty that all lesser elements of consciousness are generated; for Beauty is an element within the Mind itself, and not something generated by mechanical contact with exterior conditions.

Beauty, therefore, becomes the definition of Mind in its highest, for this power to define carries with it the power to perceive, and so an impetus is given down the whole descending scale of all that is merely human on earth.

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Man becomes what he is by his power to perceive what he is.

And perception of self can only come by understanding the universal passions of humanity, not in order that they should be destroyed, but in order that they should be used.

Of these, first of all is Desire, by which Man regenerates the earth.

Sex is not only the basis of life, it is the *reason* for life. Desire is given man in order that he may *not* realise it. It is his eternal stimulus to renew life; and his inability to realise it is the whole basis of his effort to realise it. It exists as a means, not as an end; as a spur to action, which is kept alive by never being gratified.

When Desire fails, the function of man has ended. When he proclaims its failure holy, virtue is at an end also.

We need not wonder that evil has found its opportunity in that old, sad cry, "All is vanity."

They are subtle, these gentry of the abyss, and when the human mind is relaxed, tired, overcome by the stress of life, they whisper tenderly, "Come unto us, all ye who are heavy laden, and we will give you peace."

But our morality repudiates this mean craving for narcotics. We turn again to the one spiritual stimulus, which is the courage to remain gay, strong, and happy; which acclaims as holy the marriage of Passion and Beauty, by which mind is regenerated on earth.

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The effort of these essays has been to define the creative stimulus, in order to differentiate from it that which is stimulated.

Once again, then, let us repeat the statement of how this process is brought about.

Perception of Life is aroused by the power to define life. And this definition is not something once done, and done with. Like Life itself, it must be eternally renewed, since it no more than eternally repeats the process by which Mind was first generated on earth.

And this, once again, is the power to define the nature of an object *before* the eye has perceived the shape of an object.

Observation arrives by perception, perception arrives by knowledge. Therefore, we arrive

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at the enigma that knowledge of the thing arrived on earth *first*, in order to bring with it the power to define the thing, in order to see it.

This is the only locked door, before which all picklocks pause in vain. But the deduction remains indestructible. That which came from beyond earth, returns beyond earth.

A mystic circle is completed. But we on earth have least concern with this problem of Whence and Whither. It is sufficient for us to know that we *are* here, which we would never have known, if the Creative stimulus had not defined us to ourselves, and so given us the power to perceive the visible structure of Life on earth.

To this we subjoin the final paradox of scepticism, which is the impulse that *must* deny the futurity of life beyond earth, in order to centre attention on the problem of Life itself.

Therefore, we uphold all pessimism of Mind, which rejects the windy optimism of Heaven. The high mind must strive with Life in order to despair of Life. This despair of the future is the evidence of futurity we seek, for it lives by the perception of something higher than life on earth can offer.

Scepticism is the first condition of morality, because it keeps alive the great stimulus of uncertainty.

It defends man against the worst disaster that could fall upon him, and that is, *proof* beyond doubt of life continuing after death.

Belief in such a life we may have; conviction of such a life we may have; but proof we must not have had. The reason is apparent.

Man on earth is not strong enough to support the burden of such a knowledge.

As it is, his own development here is an almost unbearable tax on endurance. If there were added to it the anticipated problem of another and different problem of development, his little effort here would collapse.

Therefore, we confirm even the materialist, who insists that the grave is our finality. He, at least, has placed a limit on his power to endure knowledge, and if he is most right where he is most wrong, he at least gives his best effort to the future in devoting it wholly to the problem of To-day.

His value is, that his negation of life beyond earth negatives also that base affirmation of it that also demands it as a right.

How much have we suffered from this sad and bad effort to foretell the future problem, which has so vitiated our energy, and corrupted the serious business of our life on earth? Worst of all, these priests and witch doctors have taken it upon them to *console* man for the gift of life by promising him the reward of Heaven.

If we step aside from the morality of scepticism here for a moment, it is but to catch the echo of an immortal laughter and derision.

“Thank you kindly, sir,” said the archbishop, when they handed him a pick and shovel in the next world.

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THE Elder mind and the Ageless mind are seated once more together. The Ageless One has forgotten his wine, and let his pipe go out. Something of complacence has gone, perhaps, from both minds.

The Elder.—Did you wish to speak?

The Ageless One.—Yes, I would be glad to return to a certain question before we part.

It seems that we have arrived at some understanding of where consciousness ends on earth, but are we any nearer understanding where consciousness begins?

The Elder.—Does not this question also arrive at where consciousness ends, for what but final consciousness ever asks it?

The Ageless One.—True. And this would seem the strangest enigma of consciousness, that it should arrive at itself *only* to question itself.

The Elder.—Then surely the enigma is answered, because no answer is ever returned. We need not even guess the reason for this silence. Effort demands it. It is the essential stimulus of all understanding and development.

Need we question further the utter viciousness of all priesthood that affects to answer for the nature of man's destiny beyond earth. Here we are at the door of evil, which is passivity, resignation, giving up effort on earth in order to merit Heaven. Man must strive with destiny, in order to go beyond himself. He must conquer the unknown, which is not in God, but in him-

self. God is all that is opaque, all that submits to inertia, in order to resign the pain of high consciousness.

The Ageless One.—Yes, that is true. All that clogs effort is so much added to the nerves and muscles; light is but our perception of darkness. This eternal emphasis by contrast may be essential to our poor earth perception, but surely, once perceived, it adds an intolerable strain to consciousness. It is hard to dwell always with an unknown enemy, and I think that if we have arrived at knowing that the direction of consciousness beyond earth must remain a mystery, we have a right to ask why the arrival of consciousness on earth should also remain hidden.

The Elder.—Ask then; who will answer? I suspect that if we knew where consciousness began, we would also know where it ends. Let us leave this question to the good insect mongers, who draw such complacent assurance from the mortality of ants.

The Ageless One.—Pardon me if I am insistent. The question has been raised here already. What was its statement?

“Vision is that which defines the nature of a thing *before* the eye has defined the shape of a thing.”

How can this be argued?

The Elder.—Is not to know the shape of a thing in itself an act of definition?

The Ageless One.—But are not seeing and knowing parts of the same act?

The Elder.—Most surely not. One is an active

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and living element, the other passive and mechanical.

In truth, so many absurdities have been piled upon this first of all causes that one is almost ashamed to discuss it. Where do all suppositions of the origin of mind begin on earth? "Induction from observation," is it not?

The Ageless One.—That is the formula.

The Elder.—It is already a contradiction of its own theory, for how can observation produce thought, when thought alone can produce observation. *Thought must come first!*

Here alone is the evidence that must destroy all assumptions that the power to think could have arrived by the mechanical action of the human lens which reflects objects.

Such a thing is no more possible than it is possible for a dog to acquire the power of thought by its senses, which are the same as ours.

We must *know* what a thing is before we can even see it. Merely to reflect a shape can bring no effort of comprehension of its significance. Instinct is not a process of comprehension at all. It is wholly mechanical. Our senses in themselves are no more than blind antennae, reacting by contact with the entity that sets their mechanism in action. If the entity is not there, they cease to act. Displace one of the processes by which in-

stinct arrives at its objective, and the whole mechanical action fails. The animal dies.

The theory that mind can be the growth of a reasoned and active process from a blind and passive mechanism is one to which all materialistic thought clings, and there is not a single evidence by finite observation to support it.

Thought forgets always that it arrived in a vacuum. How can this be otherwise, since mental coma has no memory?

But we have under our eyes even finite evidence of the fact that thought can be induced by the power of suggestion from without.

We know that savage races, that have lived for countless centuries in a condition just removed from that of the pure animal, brought into contact with more civilised humanity, are able to advance suddenly by the power of suggestion and imitation. Alone, they were unable to advance an iota.

Then why should we suppose it possible for the first primitive savage, surrounded by the gigantic primitivism of nature, to do what a savage cannot do for himself to-day, though surrounded on all sides by partial civilisation.

In truth, the savage, wherever he appears, is an anomaly that destroys all those pretty progressive theories of advance by induction from observation, for why does he remain a savage? He has had just as

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long a time to develop in as the highest human mind.

No, we must put aside all supposition that mind can have anything to do with growth from savagery. All that grows there is a physical process, destined to hold for a period the embryo mind on earth. We must put aside also all those laborious efforts to think which we roughly call science, for what are these but man's tortured struggle merely to *see* the conditions that surround him.

What can a knowledge of man's physical structure have to do with man himself? Its shape and functions are only the symbol of his physical mission, destined to be thrown aside once this is accomplished.

What can a knowledge of the process and formation of such a primitive little germinating heap of decayed matter as that we call Earth have to do with the history of mind?

Nothing has muddled man's effort to develop more than this eternal striving to reconcile the conditions which surround mind with mind itself. What are these conditions but mind's perception of them? In themselves they are neither important or significant, any more than an incubator is significant of the hen it produces.

But perhaps this mere tax on induction from observation is a sufficient effort for man. It has been so difficult that man must naturally conceive it a vast accomplishment.

In truth, is not just this sense of importance over the trivialities of Nature the evidence of man's enfeebled power of comprehension?

But we must never be guilty of shame in discovering that our normal condition of mind on earth is that of a half-blind organism, dimly feeling its way through darkness to a glimmer of light. That one glimmer is the hidden symbol of a perfection that goes higher than the conditions which surround mind on earth.

Because it goes beyond earth, we must accept the understanding that the power which implanted it goes beyond earth also.

For see exactly what is implanted.

Beauty, Justice, Humanity.

Are these three symbols ever realised on earth?

We are aware of them by the emphasis which is their negation, for what is Beauty to us but our own distinction from Ugliness, what is Justice but our perception of Injustice, what is our best Humanity but the ever present condition of man's inhumanity?

See what furious whips are needed to stir our poor senses to perceive these violent contrasts, and the whole history of man on earth is the record of our eminent failure to understand what is dimly perceived!

The history of man, where it is not only the dismal record of his efforts to maintain himself on earth, is wholly concerned with

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a vague consciousness towards the Hidden Symbol of Mind, and that is only made apparent to the few who perceive by the few who create.

Wherever the implanted symbol is grasped at, striving for a higher development has begun. Wherever man has created from his inner perception of Beauty and Passion, or sought a higher vision of humanity than humanity presents, he has re-implanted the seed of universal consciousness.

Bad and irresponsible as Earth conditions are, enough of man's Creative effort has been preserved for us to trace vaguely the history of mind on earth.

We may even see where the higher symbol was suddenly grasped and understood for the first time, but to perceive the extraordinary nature of this phenomenon, we must turn once again to the spectacle of man the animal.

This creature is, as we know, only a blind organism, existing wholly to fill its stomach and perpetuate its species.

Remember always, it has the mechanical means of its senses for doing this, and therefore has no need for any higher perception of actuality. As it is, so it will remain. It will repeat endlessly its mechanical function, like any other animal. Unless a miracle can be performed upon it, our earth civilisation, such as it is, will never exist, and where our comfortable humanitarianism is talked to-day, a vile, inarticu-

late human beast will snarl over its meal of blood and bones, and only a periodical function of sex will replace all our delicate dreams of Love and Beauty.

How is this blind organism to be brought to the point where it may be made even susceptible to suggestion? As it is, it is utterly apathetic and callous, and there is no point where contact of idea can be made to reach its senses.

It must be first sensitised to impression, and we see in two words how this phenomenon is brought about.

By Pain and Terror.

Pain alone the creature is able to resist. It has no nervous organisation for it to attack. It licks its wounds like a dog, and if these kill it, there is no sense of physical extinction.

The strongest goad is needed to stir the beginning of perception of self there, and therefore sensibility to pain must be created by fear. Nature will supply the means, if something more powerful and subtle applies the suggestion. Out of lightning, thunder, wind and rain, terror of the unknown may be manufactured, and wherever the animal is hurt, and therefore inactive, its attention will be drawn to the simple phenomena of nature, and thus the first idea beyond itself will be implanted; pain will be connected with fear, and the act of memory dawns on earth for the first time.

Now the creature is at the mercy of a stronger impulse than the mere desire for

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blood. It will huddle with its fellows, no longer secure in mental vacancy; no longer the animal that leaps first to kill, but the animal exposed to danger, who will begin to pause at action, lest it bring the vengeance of an unknown Terror.

Where once it killed by the blind impulse of necessity, now it will fear a little to be killed.

Where once it died snarling over its wounds, now these red gashes will be so many threats of punishment beyond the lightning and the storm.

Truly, the creature is demoralised, and it will take many centuries to breed out of it the scourge and stimulus of Terror. We see it through the long years quivering and groaning; see it through a red mist of pain long for extinction; see it driven by fear also to hate, so that when it has power it will slay to soothe its Terror by seeking to propitiate the unknown God that inspires it. Nevertheless, this visitation of Fear and Pain was essential. Without it there could be no advance. From it springs not only all that humanises, but all that seeks happiness. True, by this visitation alone mankind can never know happiness, but without the emphasis of its negation, happiness would never have been divined.

To-day, we see that the spirit which acclaims the exaltation of Life because of its eminent sense of the pain of Life is the one which has at last risen superior to the

primitive scourge and stimulus. Suffer it must, therefore it repudiates suffering.

The Ageless One.—Truly, it is a sad thought that all higher minds, which have risen by a special sensitiveness to pain and ugliness, should be those upon which the scourge falls heaviest. Those who need it least suffer it most.

The Elder.—That is their special virtue. It is the evidence of their consciousness that it must react first against the harshness and primitivism of Earth. We may see in this constantly renewed, but always isolated vision of a higher beauty and humanity, the recurrence of that moment when these symbols were first grasped on earth.

For this much we must suppose. If the expression of consciousness is rare and isolated, the symbols of consciousness were bestowed universally on man.

Review, then, if you will, the universal return in consciousness. Even by our absurd racial divisions of man, we see, perhaps, the effect of climate on the effort to develop.

All these creatures in the hot regions have failed altogether to respond. A few spears and pots, and that is the end of effort.

Those further from the central heat promise better, but they are still too close to the barbarism of the Sun. By a first perception of Beauty, Justice, and Humanity, they have improved their arts, amended their laws, and made some better dreams

of their gods, but the effort stops suddenly. Sloth overtakes it so abruptly that we are left eternally questioning the enigma of its Sphinx and Pyramids.

Almost we might say that these are the very signal of its advance and failure, these efforts so superbly planned delivered over to the desert. But stranger than such emblems of a gigantic effort is the inertia that even enacted laws that effort should cease, and that mind should advance no further. Enough of them. Their spiritual failure is embalmed in our museums, where their pitiful mummies stand in rows, petrified emblems of the terror of extinction.

Away in the north, climate has again turned the symbols of mind to a primitive expression of race. Here, where blood is thick, where the cold makes physical strength and activity of first necessity, all effort turns to action. Their songs are all of slaying, their gods are slayers; to be slain in battle merits heaven; man was born to slay, and woman to suckle forth dreams of bloodshed. They have hardly another thought, these blond animals, and mankind must suffer for many centuries the recurrence of their primitive thirst for blood. Whenever they become rich, well fed, full of strength and activity, let mankind beware. There will surely follow an outburst of primitive frenzy, till the animal has exhausted its energy, and released the pressure of its blood desires.

These eastern minds have only played with the symbols of mind. Beauty has got no further than decoration. They have evolved a superhuman tenderness with a superhuman insensibility. Their cruelty and sentimentality are equal. They suffer for the destruction of an insect while enjoying the slow torture of human bodies. In short, sensation has wholly dominated mind. Sensuality exhausted turns to extreme asceticism. Demoniacal fury dreams of utter passivity. Nerves quivering from excess find holiness in a negation of all effort.

Alas, would that *all* the East had turned effort to the negation of effort; and had found its solution to failure in extinction.

Mankind has paid heavily for the blood lusts of the North. It has paid more heavily for the spiritual lusts of the East.

If the Jew also had never existed, what might not mankind have gained?

Here slavery to the senses has taken a strange form.

Physical tiredness has gone beyond licentious dreaming of an idle heaven. It has planned an eternal orgy of revenge as well. It wishes to lie in a golden beatitude of sloth, watching a vast spectacle of torment. It wishes to escape the pain of earth by the narcotic of Heaven, but Heaven alone is not a sufficient reward for its jaded senses. These must be stimulated by the thought of suffering in others. How could

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creative exaltation spring from such a source?

Its laws, its songs, its humanity; these are all typified in its God. Its highest symbol of Justice is to dream of eternal revenge, for its brooding obsession with self can get no further than the division of mankind into two halves;—the oppressors and the oppressed.

We seek to explain the Jew geographically.

Surrounded by more brutal and primitive tribes, we say, persecution has driven fear and hatred inwards, so that it turns naturally to dream of release from the harshness of life in picturing an ideal of security for itself, while its enemies are given over to the vengeance of God. But the Jew is not singular in his isolation surrounded by barbarism. All individual expression of mind was, and is, surrounded by barbarism.

This in itself is the test of the individual expression of mind—the courage to advance beyond the stimulus of barbarism, not to find no other stimulus *but* barbarism.

Exactly at this point remains all that we on earth understand by humanitarianism, and we see that the Jew has typified this universal impulse. It is altogether a failure in psychology to suppose that Jesus or Paul, or any other accidental human expression, could *direct* such an impulse. They are the effect of it, not the cause.

We must go much deeper than the casual episode of a crucifixion, or the casual activity of a social agitator to explain why nearly the whole of mankind has expressed its humanity by this emblem of man on the cross.

It *needed* just such a brutal and simple emblem in order to take the inner step between itself and savagery.

For dwell on this profound truth.

Humanitarianism is not the furthest advance from barbarism, but only the first step from barbarism. It is the *first* advance towards mind. As we have seen, fear and pain are its stimulus. When perception has gone farthest from barbarism, it arrives at Beauty, Exaltation and the Creative impulse.

Here it has gone so far beyond the savage stimulus of pain and fear that it no longer needs the humanitarian impulse that combats them.

In short, it does not need to question so simple a problem as its humanity. All that makes for human tolerance, dignity, and nobility of mind is understood.

But where there is doubt, where the human impulse is not secure, it will need an emblem to recall its wandering attention to its own effort to advance. It will fear always a relapse into barbarism, therefore it will need to keep constantly in mind a conviction of its humanity.

Now we understand the universal impulse that has turned for stimulus to the spectacle of a crucified man.

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First of all, an effort of memory is sought.

"We must never forget how savage we once were," says these poor half-minds. "There is still much of the savage in us. All round us, too, are genuine savages, brutal and dangerous; therefore we must impress on them, and on ourselves, all emotion that seems most removed from savagery. This Jew on the cross has expressed what we already seek; tenderness, love for each other, pity for ourselves, which will make us soft to the pain of others. These things we are always in danger of forgetting, therefore let us keep our attention fixed on the spectacle of this crucified man. It is vivid, tragic, a picture of suffering wrought by blood and tears, lit up by torchlight against the darkness of our minds. Above all, it is easy to remember."

This pressing sense of self fear is ever in the minds of the people. We see why they must cling to such an emblem of suffering as this crucified Jew. If he had never existed, it would have been necessary for the people to have invented him. Accident alone supplies the emblem here. The impulse towards it is universal because the impulse from savagery is universal.

But again, that which is not universal is the expression of mind.

Of necessity, mind must express itself by the symbols of humanity common to all on earth, so that its expression of the human problem will always be that which is

also able to stir a universal human emotion. But its own quest must be Beauty and the expression of its inner vision, for these carry consciousness beyond the first poor stimulus of Pain and Fear.

The spiritual failure of the Jew is that he never reached beyond the initial period of development. One step beyond barbarism, but no further. Here, then, all humanity that still pauses at the spectacle of its god on the cross remains to this day. Here it must always remain, till the perception of a higher consciousness than that of its own humanity dawns upon it.

Let us turn at last to where the symbols of a perfection beyond earth were fully grasped and fully understood.

We speak of the Greek and the Roman as two expressions of race amidst a multitude of other races.

Let us put aside these trivial considerations of nationality and geography. Anthropology has as little to do with our problem as Botany or Entomology. The division we make discards all that is local and primitive.

The Race of Man.

The Race of Mind.

And we see without question that the Race of Mind begins with the Greek.

All that went before was only a preparation for mind. Primitive Art, primitive laws, primitive gods, these are tentative efforts to grasp the symbols that have been implanted.

For we must not suppose these were given suddenly at a decisive moment. There must have been a long period of preparation, a long period of hints and suggestion in order to gradually lead the embryo mind to the point where it would be receptive of a final impression.

And this process, we must conceive, was also concerned with the physical one of breeding mind with mind. On Earth, this must still be, and ever be, a matter of first importance, for since the primitive expression of mentality, whether in Life or Art, is a retrograde one, a primitive mentality, mated with a developed mind, will always throw the advance back many centuries.

What a gigantic and sustained labour must this have been, that brought primitive mankind to its first perception of the symbol of mind! How many millions of failures must have preceded the first success. But success, when it came, must have even rewarded all those failures! We, who owe the genesis of all high consciousness on earth to the Greek effort, how can we sufficiently adore it?

With hardly a hesitation, here was grasped first the highest perception of Beauty, Justice, and Humanity. Their gods have turned wholly to visualise and ennable man, Nature is peopled by a marvellous imagery; their thought has arrived at the visible problem of existence, and rejected it to follow the higher problem of mind; their statues have a balance of form and spirit that almost reaches perfection,

and their songs and dreams are so beautiful that for ever after they will haunt the memory of mankind.

But the mystery of this vast outburst of consciousness is that it has found and rejected the emblem of Earth beauty at a stroke. It seeks in everything a symbol higher than the best that Earth can offer. Beautiful as the human form may be, they have added a beauty to it; profound as passion may be, they have expressed it by an imagery of desire which earth senses can never reach. Even the symbol of Justice has come to such a maturity with them that if they could put it into practice, earth life would be almost perfected.

We, that are the heirs of this miraculous achievement, cannot realise it, because our consciousness is the effect of it. Because our understanding allows us to perceive the effort, we allow ourselves to believe that our understanding equals it. But this effort gave us the power to understand it. Can we realise what this means? No, our opacity of mind exists by a personal egotism that must reject humility. Later, perhaps, we will seek that humility as the first emblem of our self respect.

But even we, at this distance, see that this effort has gone too fast, too far. The anomaly of its advance is too profound for the legions of barbarism that surround its lonely glory. For a time, it is true, the evil of savagery is held back, but no human

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courage and endurance can exist for ever with such vast odds against it. The titanic struggle endures till energy is exhausted, mind relaxes effort, the common emblem of existence triumphs, and the symbols of perfection fade from human minds.

How often has our regret turned to the Roman failure also? Here the symbol of Justice was sought for first of all. All effort turns first to building an enduring state on earth. The balance and stability of these minds present us with an anomaly almost as strange as the Greek achievement, for out of chaos they evolve a profound order. Wherever barbarism encroaches, it is driven back. They actually build their great state on a foundation so splendid, that we, in a wretchedly disrupted age, look on with even a personal regret. If the effort had only rested there, we sigh.

But the courage and energy of this race are its own nemesis. It has taken upon its shoulders the gigantic problem of civilising the whole earth.

To those barbaric brains that failed to grasp the implanted symbol, it seeks to implant its own understanding of stability and justice.

But it can only enforce in these animals manners; it cannot give them minds. In the end, its effort becomes too diffuse. Instead of driving barbarism back, it brings barbarism home with it. Savage blood, dull brains; *these* are the corrosive elements that eat up the Roman energy and courage.

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These later creatures that inherit the Roman name, the Roman body, are the incestuous product of mind with barbarism, and when the outer barbarian closes in upon them, they succumb utterly.

But here we do not echo Nietzsche's passionate cry, "In vain the Greek; in vain the Roman."

How can the first expression of high consciousness have been in vain, when to it alone Nietzsche owed the consciousness that raised his cry of regret?

To think here at all, we must throw aside our utter misunderstanding of the symbol we call Time. Consciousness has nothing to do with the trivial passage of events and actions on earth. These do no more than hinder, obstruct, and waylay Mind on its road elsewhere. The enduring problem to us is that consciousness arrived on earth, and *is* on earth. How can we say the first effort perished when only an interval separates it from the second effort? Call the interval "Time," if you will. One might more justly call the period of waiting "blood."

Between Praxiteles and Shakespeare, between Shakespeare and Beethoven there is no interval of consciousness itself. The effort of each is equal, therefore the effort arrives always at where consciousness exists to-day.

Consciousness began on earth with the Greek, consciousness ends with the Greek. That is, a million years from now, the ef-

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fort will still end with the Greek. In other words, consciousness will maintain consciousness, for that is the mission of mind on earth.

The Ageless One.—And beyond earth? What then?

The Elder.—That is no concern of ours. While on earth, effort must concern itself with earth, for only by vindicating its higher sense of earth, can it go beyond earth. To this paradox we must always come.

The Ageless One.—I am impolitely insistent. I know, but you have used the word “Implanted.” That surely implies a Planter. Who guided the human mind to that point when suggestion allowed it to perceive the symbol of mind?

The Elder.—Such questions can only lead to idle talk. All stupidity begins with divine assumptions. This much we know. Man re-implants on earth the symbol of consciousness in Man. It is Mind that makes Mind here, then why should it be any other power than Mind that brought Mind here? Better a thousand times that human egotism should enthrone Man than abase itself at the feet of God. We know that even with his five poor senses, in a primitive and ugly world, under a heaviness of atmosphere that weighs down effort, amid dull brains and misunderstanding, Man *has* created Beauty and consciousness.

That is sufficient for man on earth, sufficient for us. Our conviction stops at Be-

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yond Earth. We do not seek to follow it there.

The Ageless One.—But there is a certain chatter, a mumbling of voices from the Beyond. These have reached us here; have we no right to respond?

The Elder.—Respond, if you will; you will get no response. All talk that pretends to have pierced the secret of futurity can be dissipated in a breath.

We have no symbols by which knowledge *can* be exchanged with minds beyond Earth.

That is apparent, surely. All our symbols are but the replicas of ourselves, our condition on earth. By no other means but an equality of symbols can mind communicate with mind. Therefore, how can those beyond communicate with us, since we have no single symbol in common with them? Communicate, yes; but only as earth mind talks to earth mind. It is we who can communicate with them, not they with us.

We have only to read the earthly effort to express its sense of the Beyond to see how utterly opaque is the wall between our understanding and that beyond Earth. An absurd jargon made up of primitive religion, occultism, scientific formulas, and bad poetry.

What can our consciousness have to do with this rubbish, which expresses no more than the vague and undisciplined longing to escape nervous stress? We see that its

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effort is to escape consciousness; to find a narcotic in windy dreams of space.

What is all such mysticism but childish wonder by the sense of incomprehensibility?

See how it argues: "Because this problem is complex to me, I must think of it in complex terms. Because I cannot understand it, I must express it in terms most removed from all that I *can* understand."

In truth, I suspect that the real mystery of the Universe is not its complexity, but its simplicity. It is much too simple for our muddled earth organisms to grasp, for is it not the mark of nearly all the little earth profundities that they lose themselves in space? The big mind is always direct and certain in its expression; only the half mind wavers and succumbs to wonder and amazement.

No, we reject all that is occult; all that strays from the simple problems of Birth, Love, Passion, Desire, and the direct problem of Man on Earth. All that is vague, hidden, shifty, comes like all bad dreams, from the East. It is bad because its basis is one of physical exhaustion. Sensualism gone stale turns always to dream of Heaven. We need no better guide to its evidence of physical decay than its use of the word "Purity."

Wherever human expression demands a condition, its demand is the evidence that it lacks such a condition. Understand,

then, all who are too busy with such words as Love, Purity, Holiness, Equality.

No man on earth who has Desire dare repudiate Desire, for Desire is the first reason for man's existence on earth.

The function of sex is man's great physical virtue.

If it is overdone, so much the worse for nerves, but better excess than no desire at all.

But no *mind* ever runs to excess.

Those who talk of getting rid of desire have been already got rid of by desire.

If there is no desire, there is no vitality.

If there is only desire, there is no mind.

We see whence springs all that is vague, mystical, abstract in human thought.

It is the reaction from excess.

As satyriasis breeds the ascetic monk, so the failure to understand earth leads to all misunderstandings of heaven.

Our consciousness is bent first to disciplining its understanding of man on earth, and understanding can only be reached by a knowledge and love for all functions that are expressed by human passion.

We seek to express, not to repress; to find beauty absolute, not an abstraction; to record as spiritual our power to record sensation.

Not by losing ourselves in opium dreams of Heaven, do we seek to escape the stress of nerves and destiny, but by

THE HIDDEN SYMBOL.

finding ourselves in all that renders us most conscious of ourselves.

Because we repudiate vision-mongers and witch doctors, it is not to be supposed that we have any concern with those who make a doctrine from ants and earth-worms.

If we believe that the chemical change from this life to the next is very much that of the embryo's emergence into this, we do not deny the wonder and mystery of Life itself.

We believe that the physical function of producing life is the reason for Life on earth.

We believe that life begins development by its power to perceive the conditions which surround it.

We believe that surfaces, tones, light, colour, forms, scents, sounds, are but the language by which we record perception, and that by our intensity of feeling we arrive at an intensity of knowing.

We believe that these emblems of perception are the symbol of a Perfection already implanted in the mind, and that a knowledge of the search directs its effort.

We believe that all voyages to this mysterious unknown must be made through the undiscovered country of the human mind.

By this road alone we advance to the Hidden Symbol, which we have only agreed to call Mind, and our courage must endure the conviction that on earth we must seek, but never find. By failure, we achieve our best success.

THE LAST WORD.

Here, by an exercise of patience and endurance, we continue Effort, for this, at its highest, already reaches out towards the next,—the greater effort beyond Life on Earth.

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